Sheikh Hussain Kawrani

The Infallible and the Text

Translated from the Arabic
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Provide

The Infallible and the Text is an extremely important reference work on the issues of a number of methodological approaches that have been deemed objective, though that they have diverted from the sound rational and scientific method. Sheikh Kawrani starts by explaining the multiple approaches to methodology. He argues that those who base their views on the history of methods of the 17^{th} century only speak about the experimental method, not method in general. It becomes clear that the experimental method should be rejected for failing to explain the least of the acknowledged recognition of issues on human knowledge, and thereby proving the intellectual rational doctrine's hypothesis on the presence of preceding rational knowledge.

However, Sheikh Kawrani argues that the Holy Qur'an, as the last revealed book of divine religions, was given to exercise its religious role towards man's interest in knowledge and science and to deal with humanity that began to establish its knowledge upon science and experience and defines its positions towards every issue according to such knowledge. This book sets its logical basis, is closer to common human understanding and is more capable of filling with faith the sentiments and the heart of man, any man, than do the philosophical proofs of theoretical abstract forms limited to reason and thoughts of philosophers.

By doing this, it was possible to introduce an inductive experimental method capable of covering all fields of knowledge. The referential authority of reason and previous intellectual rational knowledge remain prevalent insofar as

certainty cannot be arrived at without it, and by any type of inference.

In principle, this means that the method is one of man’s existential necessities and instinctive core. Methodology, in all its components, characteristics and tools, is an instinctive quality and the basis of methodological thought; and its general rules have been associated inherently with man's reason.

Nonetheless, Sheikh Kawrani shows that the “rational method” is the denominator among all diversified methods, whether or not explicitly described as rational.
What is the methodological truth of this method that is acknowledged in rational fields? Moreover, the rational method implies that other methods lack rationality, and thereby, the metaphysical method of sublime knowledge becomes opposed to rationality, although the two share one source, reason. In such a fashion, the experimental method alone is allegedly claimed to be the method of rationality. On a higher level, Sheikh Kawrani views knowledge as the utmost value in human life that is unequalled by any other value. The knowledge about inanimate beings is not similar in class to that on animal life, nor is knowledge on man’s anatomy similar in class to knowledge about man’s soul, mind and heart. It is knowledge, by far, that guarantees the accomplished integration of man. Furthermore, when knowledge is associated with action the highest levels of humanity are then demonstrated. The principle of an attainable sublimation by man’s choice certainly embeds the opposite. The same applies to man as a creation with a free will.

Thus, Sheikh Kawrani argues that man shares with angels the possession of reason - the secret for success with optional compliance. In the divine creation of man, Godhood does not indicate the absence of free will. The notion of God's creation of man and his deeds as revealed in "*When Allah hath created you and what ye make*" [37:96] does not signify coercion. Thereby, free will and free choice are two sides of one single truth.

However, a free will cannot be exercised without choices, and so choices cannot be attainable without knowledge. The extent of available knowledge reveals the same of freedom and choice. As cited earlier, there is no sense for thought without reason. The potential for knowledge building includes thought.

In examining the position of infallibility, Sheikh Kawrani finds some relevant indications to the Infallible as the apex of man completeness by joining between knowledge and deed and by embodying within the deed the possession of knowledge. While man is incapable of anticipating the future, God has the knowledge of what will be along the span of all times. The Infallible obtains a sort of knowledge of the facts of things. It is this knowledge that has qualified the Infallible, by his free will, to arrive at sublimation that can in principle be arrived at by all humans.

Interesting and from that perspective, infallibility is possible for each human individual. The completeness of reason makes possible the correlation between knowledge and action. This allows the Infallible an approach towards the practical course while maintaining the right path of reason.

Reason and prophethood, yet infallibility, are two sides of one truth, that is, pretext, evidence and proof. The visible [is demonstrated] in messengers, prophets, and imams, whereas the invisible [is sensed] in reason."

On another topic, Sheikh Kawrani argues that the need for an infallible rises as a testing ground for all humans. The test is 'free will', the core of human dignity. The good choice made by the Infallible comes in favour of man's dignity. An absolute proof of this understanding can be concluded from God Almighty's answer to the angels who sought to learn the cause behind man's succession on earth. The Infallible is to guide people in exercising their free will by setting an example that joins between knowledge and deed.

The novelty of Sheikh Kawrani lies in his development of the idea that the basic relationship between infallibility and freedom of man is found in the affirmation of the principle of human dignity. The religious fiqh (jurisprudence) is the understanding of man's dignity.

The central point in this aspect is the difference between the origin of man and his dignity. This is followed by the difference between man's dignity as per his own course, even if he renounced his own human nature, and man's dignity as per human standards. The distinctive quality of man is not merely within his 'free will', but in being 'a man with a free will.'
While knowledge is based on a context, thought and information, thought is but freedom and dialogue.

Everyone agrees that humanity is the utmost value and that man is the master of the world. Some regard man as the master of creatures and God's successor on earth, whereas others regard the discussion on creatures a mere backwardness.

Thus, man, argues Sheikh Kawrani, is much larger than all materialistic dimensions arrived at by people. Man remains much larger than all this as long as he does not renounce the truth and as far as ignorance is not favoured to knowledge. The concluded conclusion is that the knowledge that the Infallibles have presented to people is simply the 'knowledge of the self.' This 'knowledge of the self' is rendered as: 'knowing God is attained through God.' Ultimate ignorance is man's ignorance of the affairs of himself. Ultimate wisdom is man's knowledge of himself.
Utmost reason is man's awareness of himself. Knowledge of the self is sufficient knowledge and ignorance of the self is sufficient ignorance.

Man's lack of knowledge in oneself leads into a negative attitude towards his own interest. Human completeness is subject to knowledge. Knowledge is in turn the core in exercising free will, taking into consideration that such knowledge is associated with application.

Yet on another level, Sheikh Kawrani forwards the idea that the prophets had also affirmed that they were humans and yet messengers. Being human does not prevent possessing another quality that enables conveying the message of God. The Prophet is a human messenger. Whoever loved God

followed His messenger and whoever obeyed God obeyed His messenger. In relating to the divine knowledge and power manifest in His messenger it is quite amazing how we assert the utmost value of man, including the value of failing men, upon the applicable 'authenticity' of man in general; yet, we minimize the value of the Infallible to less than a naïve ordinary man.

Thus, Sheikh Kawrani indulges in discussing the matter from an erroneous understanding of the Infallible's human nature that they deny the unseen aspect of his character. A methodological definition in approaching the Infallible becomes necessary.

The Infallible is a human being distinguished from all humankind by reason, knowledge and good choice in exercising of his free will, including morals. This, however, does not contradict with his human nature. The sense judges that the Infallible must be referred to on issues within his knowledge according to the same logic that requires an illiterate to refer to and accept the teachings of those of knowledge. Quotes on the 'unseen' soundly attributed to the Infallible are not subject to judgment of reason that nullifies metaphysical knowledge.

In exploring the particulars of the Inerrant Text there arises the attributes and the constituents, Sheikh Kawrani makes the distinction between the definite texts and all attained human knowledge as the difference between the truth and the attempts to reach that truth or missing it. It is the difference between the Infallible and all people. The Infallible "*Nor doth he speak of desire*" but rather conveys the words of God.

And consequently, the difference between the Inerrant Text and other texts is similar to the difference between God Almighty and His creation. This asserts the implicit wealth of knowledge within the sacred and Inerrant Texts, a knowledge that never occurs to reason of man, except that of the Infallibles.

According to Sheikh Kawrani, the Inerrant Text is one manifestation of human dignity upon which lies the prerequisite to turn magnificent human powers from the state of potential into the state of actuality. This signifies the integration of humankind in order to transform a ‘human information’ into a true human knowledge. This discussion relates to the shift of interaction with the wealth of knowledge, that the Inerrant Text carries its message into a stable public situation.

Consequently, Sheikh Kawrani makes the distinction that knowledge is neither similar to the perfection of knowledge nor to the immature knowledge. The constituents of the Inerrant Text are all based on the monotheistic universal perspective from which such a text is inspired. The constituents define our view of the God, the human and the universe. The accumulated knowledge in the Inerrant Text is based on the fact that the human has come to the world from the ‘unseen world’ and shall return to it inevitably. This simply means that the Inerrant Text does not dissect the existence to scrutinise the part of the worldly life and theorise accordingly such as perceived by all other texts.
This leads Sheikh Kawrani directly towards the fact that the respect for man is but an exclusive constituent of the Inerrant Text. The Inerrant Text differs from all other scopes of

knowledge ever attained by human race in its distinctive principle that man was created to live eternally. The factual aspect consisting of all the prerequisites for choice, knowledge and law by which justice is attained. Clearly, this essential principle is vividly present in all aspects of the life of humankind in the earthly existence, knowledge and practice.

The Inerrant Text stipulates a main rule on the interaction between the soul and the outward, or rather on the intent and the soul. The intent gains its higher status because it is the strategic action that man possesses, the man to whom God ordered the angels to prostrate. Thus, Sheikh Kawrani concludes that the Inerrant Text reflects the glorious status of humans by considering their deeds, and thereby intents, as one reason capable of making them larger than the time they live in. The Texts had been clear that Man is the larger world and his heart is wider than Heaven and Earth. This clarifies the vast difference between Man as perceived within the Inerrant Text and the common perception of man as a semi-human within the civilisation of the body and the machine.
Sheikh Kawrani is confident that a good human life remains available for man. God will continue to supply man with light to lead a good life amongst people. In asserting the compliance of man with his human prerequisites, the Inerrant Text is but confirming that such compliance is within obedience of God without any other implicit purpose. Only then can man reap the fruits of his human nature. The journey of man on earth must be guarded. This punctual balance is referred to by the Inerrant Text as an act of God.

The aforesaid view does not contradict with the fact that the Inerrant Text refers to the cited issues on the basis that man is a creature. Humanity revolves around reason and justice. These characteristics require man to submit to the divine law. The law guarantees freedom and the good interest of man within the system of public interest and freedom of all men. Man’s private life is also subject to the service of his community. It is within the constituents of the Inerrant Text to give consideration to all facts of knowledge with which humanity shall deal along the transcending journey, from the unknown to the known, in all fields of knowledge with no exception.

For Sheikh Kawrani the Inerrant Text refers implicitly or explicitly to all fields of scientific advancement that man shall arrive at, including medicine, anatomy, laboratory, physical health, nature and space invasion. The Inerrant Text relays the words of God, the ever Knower of all things, to His creation, so that the latter can arrive at the utmost scales of knowledge. The text conveys the clues for knowledge while preserving the basics and the clears. The Inerrant Text attentively focuses on the philosophy of existence and human sciences, self knowledge in its both individual and social arenas. Consequently, the Inerrant Text presents society as made up of real individuals, disallowing any effacing of neither their features nor rights.

Addressing the Inerrant Text has been, and still is, experiencing the puzzling balance between the explicit (visible) and the implicit (invisible) and in furnishing each with its natural truth asserted by reason and proven by evidence. The above verse was addressed in the past

according to the knowledge attained at the time. Every approach to the text must be based on this principle if the approach intends to be conclusive and consistent with sound reason and righteous appreciation.

Sheikh Kawrani concludes his views by saying that the Inerrant Text joins man inseparably as long as man is accountable for his actions. The Inerrant Text in general is the word of God. The word is deeper than its human connotation and acts. The divine knowledge of God is inclusive of all terms, meanings, indications, consequent implications, related words, phrases and expressions. The Inerrant Text constructs its systematic approach on man, the noblest of creatures and the master of the earthly existence and the Hereafter, should man employ his entire potentials for the utmost of humanity, while the modern age employs man's potentials in service of animalism where ignorance and imprudence turn humanity into a subordinate thing or object, paying attention to the Infallible or the Inerrant Text is given no chance.

In the final analysis, Sheikh Kawrani draws our attention that man's perspective on the universe, life as well as his existence within and his natural position is that of being a creature, not a creator. As a creature, man possesses a perception of knowledge and ignorance, values, needs, the benefit, the harm, the duty and the reward.

Man is aware of the needs of his soul and body. The question is about man, not means. The divine legislation drafted for humankind is to cover all stages of the life of man on earth. It is not related to the meanings of the text. The comprehension

of the articulation is not specific to the religious text but is inclusive of all texts.

Thus, Sheikh Kawrani's The Inerrant Text presents religion as the highest clear way to arrive at understanding of minds. The source of religion is God Almighty. That religion cannot be attained by mere thinking means that minds should be activated in search for the divine knowledge. Thus, a search into the Inerrant Text for the understanding of cultural independence would show us that the Text provides humankind with sublime methodology, or the unique and logical type of methodology. The Text addresses humans everywhere, in all the times and with every language. The Inerrant Text was fully conscious of providing every prophet with a message befitting the scientific knowledge of his era.

This text of Sheikh Kawrani is a must reading for all those who are interested in truth, knowledge, infallibility, understanding, and above all the true essence of Islam and its methods of truth and happy life. His work includes a vast wealth of sources of understanding and scholarship.

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Dedication

To the martyrs of the Islamic Resistance and to its devoted warriors who were not allured by the materialistic 'method' but led by reason towards the vastness of the unseen, towards the school of "*But I cast love over thee from Me and in order that thou mayest be reared under Mine eye*".

To those men and women who have engaged much in God's praise, to the strangers whose hearts have been overwhelmed with divine words, to the knowers whose faith has not been distorted by materialism nor the fantasies of Sufis.

To those who are the true pioneers of the practical aspect of the rational method and its true embodiment, the method of the unseen.

To them I am honoured to present these words.

Hussain Kawrani.

Preface

(1)

There is a far-reaching information flaw in the rational arena where Muslim and non-Muslim rationals, including many Islamists who are engaged in Islamic cultural affair, attempt to approach the definition of the Infallible or the text.
This flaw had earlier diminished in many circles at the prime of the Islamic Revolution's victory in Iran and amidst its glorious achievements or consequences. But, it has been gradually regaining and resurfacing again and trying to reconnect with its roots, and to penetrate into every materialistic environment that had failed in interacting with its values and had thereby isolated itself, impressed with the materialistic ego and masking reality as realism.

This information flaw can be described as a 'driftage'. This is due to the fact that the 'materialistic' method has penetrated the strongholds of the rational method, invaded, and thus occupied, and seized it to the extent where the former thus speaks in the name of the latter. Such is similar to Zionism that speaks in the name of Palestine, the occupied land, where al-Quds becomes Jerusalem, assuming it carried the same connotation and even with a flavour of modernism, advancement and civilization.
There is much drifting towards the Nazism of the Zionists and their effacing of the characteristics of Palestine and the renunciation of its displaced people similar to the drifting towards the materialistic method, the effacing of the features of reason and the renunciation of its consequences, the apparent and the hidden, both theoretically and practically, or

even more practically to the extent where its association with theoretical denial is so exposed. It is with no wonder that such approaches and events all take place under the cover of the rational and the methodological.

In inhabiting the circles of the rational method, the materialistic method goes too far in violating the rational characteristics and qualities to the extent that it claims that the metaphysical (the unseen) method a contradiction to the rational. However, this would be similar to claiming that the rational method contrasts itself. The truth is that it is the materialistic method that contradicts with the rational, simply because it is not a method at all nor does it abide by any rational rules, though claiming so.

It is with more bitterness that we find a number of those individuals assumed to cherish the metaphysical method inclining to classify the metaphysical as opposite to the 'objective reality', as if metaphysics (or the unseen) was a case of utopianism and blasphemy and is therefore not permitted to be one part of the objective reality.

(2)

In usual cases, large-scale wars and military operations are concurrent with security, political and economic hostile intervention. Although this is quite evident, it is hardly ever pointed to the major synchronising transformation that takes place in the cultural arena. The impact of these hostile acts inflicted on ideological and moral circles is so damaging that such circles eventually collapse and vanish as dust in the wind.

As we have, at most, failed to realise the more evident changes that have been piling up since the fall of the Ottoman Empire, and are still accumulating, it is yet more the norm to fail greatly in realising the accompanying cultural changes. In comparison with the change in the method of knowledge, all cultural and rational changes remain a subject of mere detail. A political military invasion gains control when the strongholds of the method of knowledge collapse and thereby all efforts to recapture the violated rights and the lost dignity go in vain unless they base back on and launch from the method of knowledge.

The method of knowledge is the path to the truth. It is the only means enabling the right and sound construction of the straight character. Such a character is the basis in the fight against oppression, tyranny and enslavement. An admissible violation of the method of knowledge can only intensify oppression and expand the nullification of the other, though until a further notice.

(3)

In the distorted age of globalization – that is a true word with a false purpose- the arms of haughtiness in the earth have stretched globally. There is no longer a need for army advances or deployment of artillery and tanks. Invasions of borders and strongholds and the forced sieges, imprisonment, torture and killing have all become operations of a global execution. Changes can now take place without any roaring machines of war or destruction and with much smaller arrangements incomparable to those required in the past wars. Centres of sovereignty and independence are now being

remotely controlled whereas resources for living are being confiscated so that those 'who are not with us' may starve to death while the world falsely claims its fight against terrorism and its advocacy of human rights. Should there be a necessity, the Security Council is always at hand to issue a few lines that can change the world, acting as a secretary to the logistics department. Hadn't it been to the false globalization none of this would have been possible.

And there goes the United States with its firm grip on the world, even before mobilizing humble units of its military troops to the borders of Afghanistan. Perhaps this mobilization was made while the so-called outlaw nations did not comprehend yet the marauding changes of globalization, or even when the USA itself was not confident yet about such transformation and pillage, making confused speeches on starting a war and later opting for war by launching heavy air strikes.

In this preying age of globalization, it goes without saying that losses in the method of knowledge are far more costly than in any other age. It is premature to discuss the consequences in detail, but I am to stress on how significant is the integrity of the method that directs all our rational and cultural understandings and how deformed it has become following the many raids against our Islamic world, more fiercely and devastating one round after another. In order for us to prepare for and to fight the next round we must realise the gravity of damages and losses that we have been inflicted with since the first rounds of invasion.

(4)

Ever since the fall of the political system in the Islamic world and the subsequent westernization, the methodological field has been subject to confusion that can be highlighted in the following 'methodological' consequences:

1. The emergence of a trend that employed non-methodological materialism as a method in approaching issues on values, revelation, the unseen, life and the Afterlife. This trend bases its views on the impulse of desire and the 'values' of the actual fact, assuming this was the basis for understanding the objective reality. Accordingly, for example, a 7-ton US bomb weighs more in this trend's practical scale than all human rights.
2. The emergence of a selective trend that believed in and resorted at certain occasions to the rational method. However, it tends to drift on many issues towards an approach similar to that applied by the previous trend yet in much variation and skepticism reaching grades parallel with atheism, from the apparent to the obscure.

Scholars who come from an Islamic background and who incline to discuss religion with tools short of professional understanding of the text and its facts can be listed under the first trend. Whereas, Islamists who disregard the scientific rational method by approaching a selective process that complies with the new age and modernism join the second trend.

It is necessary to point that the large scale of flaw amidst Islamists is not less grave nor less spreading in Islamic circles. The problem does not pertain to personal cases or to

scholars of irregular approaches –where such classification is but a shallow addressing of a major flaw and a demonstration of deficient methodology.

As much as grammar does not prevent one from linguistic errors nor logic from erroneous thinking, so is the science of methodology. The problem does not reside in the knowledge of the method but in the applicable compliance.

We, scholars of ideology and culture in the post-collapse of the Islamic rule, are required much more than those in the pre-collapse age to show modesty when claiming methodology and to investigate thoroughly before we accept and endorse any certain methodology, keeping in mind an attitude of "*I do not exculpate myself. Lo! The soul enjoineth unto evil, save that whereon my Lord hath mercy*". Else, the alienation of the cultural scene shall grow stronger and the exchange of accusations shall continue without our full awareness.

(5)

In identifying the areas of methodological flaw in Islamic circles in particular we find the following two characteristics as most prominent:

One: Applying a 'theory of conspiracy' in the information range, where what is accepted by others is rejected and vice versa, building on precaution towards others and judging on background, allowing for many facts to be wasted and absorbing random thoughts without scientific examining.

Two: Covering most characteristics of 'treachery' and 'heresy' in the information range under the excuse of realism, rationalism and modernism. This opens the door ajar to a

further violation of texts, values and facts and leaves 'genuineness' out of reach, as distant as independence and dignity is to helpless nations.
The two trends fiercely fight one another, which is a normal result, yet noticeably keeping the studies on methodology absent. However, this very attitude is viewed by the majority as the result of the perfect scientific evidence and method. Although it is impossible to entirely avoid differences when studying the method, there remains a chance to minimize the differences and escape further damages incurred by non scientific opinions. This should enable the public to make a reasonable judgment of raised opinions rather than being driven into uncertainty and confusion.

There is also a need to conduct a scientific study on the issues of dispute away from the ever short proofs opposite the long discussions. The staggering attempts in approaching the method and the selective absorption of this and that have evolved into contrasting and fragile trends and views responsive to subjugation, leaving us in the information scale facing a duty of an ideological strife incomparable to all our political and military duties in reuniting our Muslim world. It is a duty that intertwines with the strife of the self and the integrity of its structure. It is thereby the norm for such a duty to have interlocking sacredness with the great strife and yet becoming one of its compound elements.

(6)

In addition to the flaw in the mechanism of methodology, there resides another flaw in the basics, although

methodological in its essence yet requires addressing with an independent focus. This is due to the fact that the method in approaching the text is usually deemed as referring to the mechanism or the way used in such an approach. However, it is the basics that should receive attention as they build the scale that may not be infringed while approaching the connotation of the text, and thereby exercising control over the mechanism in addressing the basics.

For example, the common view of the human nature of the Prophet (Pbuh & hf) denies most metaphysical aspects in his character and consequently disallows any further search in the text that surpasses one's time due to predetermined scale and mechanism. Whereas, starting on the judgment of reason and mind can allow for a metaphysical aspect and thereby reaching a radically different approach towards the text and its relevant rules.

The flaw in the basics being more crucial requires absolute priority in our discussion about the 'method'. The critical scale becomes clear when the two flaws in basics and mechanism blend together, as in the common trend.

Although such a double failure was earlier limited to ideologies of a non Islamic background, the phenomenon has now spread to reach a number of Islamists who are not aware that the inferential method applied in the scientific schools of 'hawza' provides sufficient mechanism to avoid an erroneous understanding of the text through sound basics contributing to the sound result of scientific and methodological research rather than drifting with the high and rough waves of cultural invasion.

The following pages include a modest introduction on the study of the 'method'. The discussion includes a number of methodological approaches deemed objective while diverting from the sound rational and scientific method.

This study is to be followed by a series of discussions titled '*On the method*'.

Blessed be God.

Hussain Kawrani
6 Shawwal 1422 AH, 21/12/2001

Chapter 1

Methodological Highlights

i. Definition of Method

Linguistically, the word ‘nahaj’ is the clear path and so are ‘al manhaj’ and ‘al minhaj’. ‘Anhaju attariiq’ means it becomes as clear as crystal.
In Arabic it is pronounced ‘al manhaj’ or ‘al minhaj’.[1]
Contextually, it has different definitions. The most famous is said to be ‘the path leading to discover a truth in science by a set of general rules governing the way of thinking and defining mind’s operations till it reaches a sound result’.[2]
Maybe the best definition is that ‘it is a research on such mental rules to achieve results.’

Since stating the different definitions helps clarify the core subject that will be necessary when making the conclusion of this research, I will add more of them:

1- The program that defines the way for us to reach the truth.[3]
2- The way that leads to discover facts in science.[4]
3- A set of general rules formulated for the purpose of reaching facts in science.[5]
4- A way of searching for the truth in any science or discipline of human knowledge.[6]

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[1] Al Zubaidi, Taj Al Arous, ‘a method’.
[2] Al Fadli, Dr. Abdelhadi, *Usoul Al Bahth* (*Fundamentals of Research*), Dar Al Kitab Al Islami Institution, Iran, p49, quoting Abdelrahman Badawi, from *Manahij Al Bahth Al Ilmi* (*Methods of Scientific Research*).
[3] Ibid, p50, quoting Badawi, from Manahij Al Bahth Al Ilmi p76.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid, p50, quoting Enaya, from Manahij Al Bahth Al Ilmi p76.
[6] Ibid, p50, quoting Al Nashar, *Nash’at Al Fikr Al Islami fi Al Islam*, Vol.1 p36.

5- A specific means that leads to a specific purpose.[1]
6- Orderly steps that are taken by a researcher to handle one issue or more and followed to reach a result.[2]
7- A set of general rules that are adopted by a researcher in arranging what they have got of ideas and information in order for them to reach a desired result. In short, a method is a way of research.[3]
8- A method: a followed technique.[4]
9- That group of general rules and regulations set for reaching acceptable facts on the aspects of the subject of interest for researchers in different fields of human knowledge.[5]
10- A group of rules based on which a fact can be understood.[6]

With these definitions there is enough information to meet the aforementioned need. They will be discussed in details later on.

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[1] Ibid, quoting Philosophy Dictionary and Arab Terminology Dictionary, the word 'Manhaj'.
[2] Ibid, quoting *Al Sah'ah fi Allugha wa Al Uloum*, the word 'Manhaj'.
[3] Ibid, p51, which is the definition chosen by Dr. Al Fadli.
[4] Dr. Raja' Wahid Dwidri, *Al Bahth Al Ilmi* (*Scientific Research*), its theoretical bases and practices, Dar El Fikr, p147.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Al Manhaj Al Aqaidi fi el Mizan, an interview with Mr. Kamal Al Haidari. Jawad Ali Kassar. Al Thaqalyn Institution, p13. There is an explanation of this definition and Mr. Haidari view point.

ii. Divisions of method

There are various method divisions set by specialists. They are not agreed upon because no effort is exerted to reach a comprehensible definition.

Lack of an accurate definition has caused confusion. Once it tended to adopt common denominators in the fields of applied research as bases to categorization and division, and some other times it tended to adopt the fields themselves as being the relevant bases. It also tended to adopt a stage that kept swinging between them both.

Below I insert two lists of method categorization. By considering them carefully, one can understand what I have mentioned earlier.

I: The first includes 8 categories as follows:[1]

1. Whitney's classification:
   a. Descriptive method
   b. Historical method
   c. Experimental method
   d. Philosophical research
   e. Predictive research
   f. Social research
   g. Creative research

2. Marquis' classification:
   a. Anthropological method
   b. Philosophical method
   c. Case-study method
   d. Historical method

[1] Dr. Dwidri, *Al Bahth Al Ilmi* (*Scientific Research*), pp. 148-149, there are references to original sources.

e. Social survey
f. Experimental method

3. Good and Scates' classification:
a. Descriptive method
b. Descriptive survey
c. Experimental method
d. Case-study method
e. Growth, evolution and genetic study method

4. Mohammad Tal'at Issa:
a. Case-study method
b. Social survey
c. Statistical method
d. Experimental method
e. Historical method
f. Comparative method

5. Abdulrahman Badawi:
a. Deductive method
b. Experimental method
c. Restorative (historical) method

6. Mahmud Qassem:
a. Research in arithmetic method
b. Research in natural sciences method
c. Research in sociology method
d. Research in history method

7. Abdulbasset Muhammad Hassan:
a. Survey method
b. Case-study method

c. Historical method
d. Experimental method

8. Ahmad Badr:
a. Documentary or historical research method
b. Experimental research method
c. Survey method
d. Case-study method
e. Statistical method

It is noted that the mental method was not included among those categories. This may be because that the methodology of any given method is supported by reason through mental rules adopted to reach results. It might also be due to an attitude towards metaphysics and considers them utopian and does not need referring to. The reason is likely to be the combination of those two elements that usually identify to formulate a situation from reason and define its terms of reference.

The second list is as follows:[1]

1- Spontaneous method:

It refers to what the public do spontaneously when thinking and working without fixed or clear plans for what they are doing. They act and react spontaneously according to each situation.

2- Speculative method:

It is so called because it was a result of speculation that led to defining its rules and fundamentals. It is divided into two sections:

[1] Al Fadhli, *Usoul Al Bahth*, pp. 51-67, with adaptation.

a. General methods, also known as logical methods: they are the general methodological rules that are referred to when researching in any field of a general discipline of knowledge.
b. Special methods, also called technical methods.

The general methods are divided into:

1- traditional method
2- mental method
3- experimental method
4- sentimental method: a way to reach the knowledges of Sufism and 'Irfanic' inspirations.
5- Integrated method: using more than one method when researching, where they integrate.
6- Comparative method: comparing things.

The special methods are the rules used in a special discipline of knowledge. They are obviously divided in accordance with the division of such disciplines.

It is noted that this classification made the mental method a separate category while it has to be considered as the divider as will be stated below. This objection should not obscure the objective to define the field of employing this method, which is 'a way to study the ideas and mental (rational) principles'[1] because this does not solve the problem of stripping other methods of the mental authority (reference of mind) and of its being the core in their 'methodology'.

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[1] Ibid, p53.

This answer raises another objection. It is the adoption of the work field of the core method in its unique naming and categorizing, which is a methodological paradox.
Explanation: when research is carried on man in definition and classification, it is not correct to deviate from 'humanity', favouring any other aspect and considering it the core issue. When classifying, it is incorrect to consider man as one division. Man is the divider.

Speaking about a 'method' is similar to speaking about the discoverability of mind and its outlining of the clear path we have to take in order to reach sound results.
Nonetheless, each field of knowledge has its own tools and other common tools with other fields. More details and clarification will follow in the next sections.

iii. Historical background

A close consideration of what has been said about the history of method is enough to realize how far many people went in fooling the past generations and nations with what they enjoyed of unparallel knowledge. There is a need to have serious researches to highlight the grave, negative dimensions -that are still carefully and constantly intensified- in the world of ideology and knowledge which resulted in what is known as the industrial revolution in spite of its immense quality benefits in the fields of services and ‘mass’ destruction as well.

Denying the great accomplishments of this milestone in man history strengthen ignorance and lagging behind. Moreover, what adds to this ignorance is to consider creativity in the field of services an excuse to blow up values and replace them with ‘industrial’ ones. And, what is connected to the research subject here is to consider the stage of the industrial revolution as the starting point of the establishment of methodology in ‘scientific’ research!

What an unprecedented fooling and undermining of previous stages! The depreciation has grown too wide that it could allure the world concerned with objectivity and methodology.

In referring to the method, the book on ‘Manahij Al Bahth Al Ilmi’ (*Methods of Scientific Research*) defines that:

‘The idea of a method with its contextual meaning known nowadays emerged in the 17^{th} century by Francis Bacon (969-1036 AH, 1516-1626 AD), John Stuart Mill, Descartes, Claude Bernard, and others. Modern scientists include Durkheim, Bertrand Russell, and John Dewey. American contemporary scientists include William Thomas, Stewart

Chapin, Morino and other prominent British, French and German scientists. The conventional meaning of a method became 'the way leading to discover a truth in science by a group of general rules dominating the way of thinking and defining mind's operations till it reaches a sound result'.[1]

From its definition, it is evident that the method refuses the 17th century to be a stage in its 'creation' rather it is a major milestone and a starting point of a quality leap in defining the tools of the experimental method - not the method in general- with the well-known contextual definition.

The 'emergence of the notion', on which research on developing the experimental method was based, was 17 centuries old in the 17th century. It came to hold the depth and integration of its long history of experience, maturity and growth and dates back to the days of Adam (as).

Dr. Al Fadhli says:

'The scientific origination of this (experimental) method was set in the 17th century by Francis Bacon. He authored the *Novum Organum*, which he started working on since 1608 then edited it 12 times and finally published it in 1620'.[2]

'This book was a turning point in the scientific history of Europe. Because of it, the inductive method gained full control of scientists methods in natural sciences. Then it was applied - with special amendments- in humanitarian

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1 Dr. Dwidri, ibid, pp. 128-129, quoting Abdulrahman Badawi, *Methods of Scientific Research*, p5.

2 Al Fadhli, *Usoul Al Bahth*, aforementioned, p55, quoting the Philosophy Encyclopedia (Abdelrahman Badawi, Beirut) Vol. 1, p394.

sciences.[1] Bacon focused on and asserted the need to strip science of its religious stains and the need to subjugate it thoroughly to scientific observation. In other words, science has to be based on positivist bases irrelevant to any religious or metaphysical influence.'

He adds:

'The bases of this method was well established in the 19th century when John Stuart Mill published his book, *A System of Logic*, after which science was separated from philosophy and religion. It depended solely on the experimental method'.[2]

Therefore, those who base their views on the history of methods of the 17th century only speak about the experimental method, not the method in general. The difference between them is obvious. It cannot be confused because of some restrictions, which could be inaccurate in defining and clarifying the desired definition, for instance, 'the method in the well-established contextual meaning', especially when we speak about 'formulation' as mentioned before.

One has to clearly differentiate between the method and methodological tools in the one hand and the divided method and its divisions on the other. Hence we can methodologically chronicle the method. Otherwise, any

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[1] Ibid, quoting *Nashat Al Fikr Al Islami fi Al Islam* (by Al Nashar), Vol. 1, p37.

[2] Ibid, quoting *Usoul Al Bahth Al Ilmi wa Manahijah* (*Fundamentals and Methods of Scientific Research*), p58, Muhammad Tal'at Issa, Al Bahth Al Ijtima'ii (*Social Research*), *Fundamentals and Methods*, Cairo, Al Qahira Al Haditha Bookshop 1963 pp. 27-28.

discussion will lack scientific accuracy and be alien in this respect.
More explanation and focus on Bacon's age and some of his texts are due because he is the pioneer of this quality move and not the founder, as it is claimed, of a school that humanity never stop speaking about. It is a school with which all nations encountered the prophets.

Among what was written about the scientific movement in Bacon's age is the following:
'Modern ages of early 17th century rose up and the century's thinkers turned away from reviving the old heritage, that included the renaissance age, and looked forward to innovation and creativity. However, among them there were those who continued to develop natural and math sciences to which scientific movement headed. The 17th century is characterized by consolidating experimentalism that was strengthened in England by Francis Bacon 1626+, the founder of the fundamentals of modern experimental method; Thomas Hobbes 1679+ with his realistic philosophy in politics and ethics, and John Luke 1704+, the founder of the epistemological studies in the modern age. It is also characterized by the creation of the intuitive method by Descartes 1650+, the father of Europe's modern philosophy. His followers spread much of this philosophy of mind in various European countries. Its top pioneers in that century were Spinoza 1677+ in Holland, Lipnitz 1716+ in Germany, and Malebranche 1715+ in France.'[1]

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[1] Sheikh Kamel Muhammad Muhammad Uwiedha (Faculty of Arts, University of Mansourah) *Francis Beckon, Philosopher of the Modern Experimental Method*, p31 (printed by Scientific Books Publishing House, Beirut, 1st Ed., 1993)

‘Bacon was born on 22nd January 1561 at York House in London [..] His father is, Nicholas Bacon, [..] the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal under Elizabeth I in her first 20 years of ruling’.
‘… Elizabeth’s era was the greatest era of the greatest country of the modern countries. The discovery of America turned trading from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean.’
‘The English trade was spread in all seas.’[1]
This clearly shows Bacon’s position of the colonial authority that Britain possessed at the time. It also shows the context where materialistic waves collide, bearing the new sentimental attack on mind.
‘Bacon authored the *Novum Organum* (New Instrument) to respond to Aristotle’s Organum. He replaced the formal model of standard thinking with a new model composed of observation and experience.’[2]
The more likely opinion is that Bacon is experimental-rational. He admits the role of reason although this role was renounced in the prevailing work of most of those who continued after him.
‘In fact he calls for renewing reason by experience.’[3]

The call for experimentalism on this basis is a must. When accused of atheism, he said:
‘I had rather believe all the fables in …[religious books], than that this universal frame is without a mind’.[4]
Despite the fact that he has so many fans, he was attacked by those denying his method who belittled what he came up

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1 Ibid/65.
2 Ibid/66.
3 Ibid/117.
4 Ibid/76.

with. They launched the fiercest campaigns that ranged between 'he didn't invent new things', 'he was not a scientist and didn't understand the experimental method' and finally 'he gave reason a new instrument for research'.[1]

[1] Ibid/83.

iv. Reference of reason

A clear concept on the reference of mind -in the validity of the method to the extent of the combination of their two 'concepts' that can be multiplied and separated- cannot be concluded unless one examines the methodological attack by those who deny reason and replace it with senses, and carefully study the rate of mind's accomplishments compared with other's 'senses, experience, observation, induction, etc'. Therefore, this 'method' constitutes a carbon copy of the position of atheists, relating all what has been proven to be God's will to other things such as 'nature, man, chance, etc'.
The source of this aggression was - and still is- the materialists who are unable to react with all the worlds of metaphysics. They inserted themselves in its already narrow corner and continued to look at it and other worlds. Their observations clearly show their inability to escape from its presence and even domination, which are the powerful presence of the 'objective reality' and its domination.

Observations made by materialists who attempt to escape from reason apparently tend to be similar to those of who intend to conceal their crime, providing enough evidence on their conviction. In this context there is a need to highlight the distinguished methodological writings made by the distinguished reference and martyr Sayed Muhammad Baqer al-Sadr (May God be Pleased with him). It seems to be his most renowned accomplishments, in his unique book 'The Logical Bases for Induction' that should receive its due

attention in rational circles concerned with methodological studies, Islamic ideology and rational ideology in general.[1]

The roots of the problem about the 'method' date back to the roots of atheism. Its progress forward and backward is proportional to the fierce materialistic atmospheres and to people's abandoning of religion, guidance and reason, and vice versa.

A careful objective view proves that the idea of the 'method' did not bring news but in the details, equally in both the sound and the infertile methods.

In speaking of the theoretical roots of the method's problem in particular, we find that they are confined within the theory of knowledge and the sources of formation. The consensus is of two core opinions:

One: Reference of reason.

Two: Reference of sense and experience.

Although those adopting the first opinion do not deny the significant factor of sense and experience, but not their reference, we find those who adopt the second opinion tending to deny the significant role of reason, let alone its reference, particularly in the prevailing trend in our present time.

The first opinion is in fact not but an "rational (mental) method". It believes that the bases leading the ideological movement from the known to the unknown must be rational. In addition, the second opinion is in fact an "experimental

[1] This book was taught by ref. S. Kadhem al-Haeri at the Hawza of Qum in 1977. The book is worth including in Hawza and University curricula and gives a chance to put into practice the unified strategy that Imam Khumaini called for.

method" that adopts the notion that such bases should be experimental.

I am not to compare between the two opinions but to refer herewith to two points:

One: that pioneers of the experimental method are divided in opinion. Some believe that no matter how hard we tried to minimize the power and dominance of reason we cannot cancel its role.

Dr. Zaki Najeeb Mahmud says:

"Most scholars who studied induction, including Russell himself, could not but recognize the presence of a mental principle - not reached by tangible experience- that stands as a basis in the generalization of scientific judgments. No matter how loyal one can be to the experimental method, in their opinion, has in the end to recognize that something does happen by means other than experiment. This is the same principle that says whatever is applicable to one species is applicable to all its individuals, and therefore the possible generalization. As a result, Russell argues that, eventually, we find ourselves obliged to refer to a non experimental basis, that he calls 'the induction principle'."[1]

It goes without saying that scholars in favour of this opinion also include those who are in favour of the reference of reason. The case is that they give great concern to experiment that is not rejected not even by Aristotle and those who follow the formal logic in general, as will follow.

Two: That the experimental method is infertile unless it is eventually exercised upon a mental (rational) principle, as argued by Russell. Therefore, the methodology of the

[1] Muhammad Baqer al-Sadr (the martyr reference), The Logical Bases for Induction, p83 (ed: Dar al-Taaruf, Beirut, 1410 AH, 1990 AD) as quoted in: Zaki Najib Mahmoud, The Positive Logic, p504.

experimental method remains short of completion by reason, and without such completion the efforts go in vain.

Martyr al-Sadr discussed the renowned techniques applied by the leading pioneer in the experimental approach, John Stuart Mill, proving that they were of no scientific use but of a limited role that minimizes any potential reasons other than the assumed reason.

In this respect, he says:

“We conclude from the above that the four techniques set by Stuart Mill, when we logically analyze their role in the inductive inference, to incline collectively to dealing with the second problem of the induction’s three problems and to resisting the probability of chance […], and similarly as the principle of Aristotle’s logic was set […] to resist this probability, so has Stuart Mill set his four techniques to resist the same probability. However, these techniques could not explain to us how probability “T” (relative chance) can be totally eliminated.”[1]

The result concluded by martyr al-Sadr can be summarized in the following:

1. “The experimental logic ranges between two affairs: It can either waive its experimental conception of causality and confess to its rational conception that embeds necessity to a degree not less than its recognition given to any inductive cause supported by the strongest inductive proofs, or to press on excluding the mental conception and to deal with phenomena of nature on basis of the experimental conception

[1] Ibid, p80, quoting the five techniques, referred to by martyr al-Sadr as four, where the third and fourth were merged, as shall follow.

of causality, and thereby failing to even interpret the inductive preference..”[1]

2. “Accordingly, it becomes clear that the experimental method[2] should be rejected […] for failing to explain the least of the acknowledged recognition of issues on human knowledge, and thereby proving the mental [rational] doctrine’s hypothesis on the presence of preceding rational knowledges.”

He added:

“In addition to that, we notice a logical succession in the experimentalists’ belief in their doctrine that says: An experiment is the basic source for all human knowledges, because such an argumentation is by itself a case where the judgment is generalized to every knowledge. And thereby, is this case built on a preceding source independent of experiment? Or is it built on experiment like any other case?”.

“Should the experimental doctrine assume that knowledges base on a precedent source it then recognizes their falsity and confirms an existing preceding knowledge. Else, if assumed they based on experiment and sensational experience it should then recognize that it is merely a probable case that may not be totally confirmed as it sees any generalization to consequences of experience and experiment as not qualifying but to a grade of probable credibility. This denotes that

[1] Ibid, p88.

[2] The experimental doctrine is different than the experimental method. The former is the logical bases upon which the latter builds on. Should the experimental doctrine refer to reason or reason it can introduce an acceptable experimental method, or otherwise it should be rejected together with the relevant method.

experimentalists take into account that the mental doctrine is right."[1]

3. "The logical bases on which all scientific inferences are based and derived from observation and experiment are the same logical bases on which inference is based on in proving the creator of the world, by qualifying characteristics of wisdom and management, and thereby this inference, like any other scientific inference, is inductive in nature and is an application of the general technique we defined for the inductive inference in both its stages[2] .. and thus proving that science and faith are related in their inductive logical basis and may not be separable according to the logical view of induction."

He added:

"This logical liaison between the methods of scientific inference and the method that inference follows in proving the creator by the manifestation of wisdom may be the reason behind the Holy Quran's focus on this inference amongst the diverse inferences proving the existence of the creator, and in corroborating the experimental and inductive manner of evidence proving the existence of the creator. The Holy Quran in being the last book of divine religions was revealed to exercise its religious role towards man's interest in knowledge and science and to deal with humanity that began to establish its knowledge upon science and experience and defines its positions towards every issue according to such knowledge. It was a normal course for the Quran to incline to the evidence of intention and wisdom, being the proof that

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[1] Ibid, pp453-454.

[2] Referring to "the stage of objective reproduction" the deductive stage of the inductive evidence and "the stage of subjective reproduction" the stage of reaching objective certainty. See, Ibid, p227 and p329.

represented the true method of scientific inference and is built on its similar logical bases and favours it to all philosophical trends in inferring the existence of God Almighty."

Martyr al-Sadr concludes by adding:
"In addition, the experimental evidence on the existence of God, that this book sets its logical basis, is closer to the common human understanding and is more capable of filling with faith the sentiments and the heart of man, any man, than do the philosophical proofs of theoretical abstract forms limited to reasons and thoughts of philosophers."[1]

In reaching these conclusions we aim to respond to the following purposes:
One: Bridging the gap that martyr al-Sadr believed existing in Aristotle's logic.
Two: Bridging the gap in the quoted paragraphs of his discussion on the experimental doctrine in respect of precedent mental knowledges.
Three: Proving the logical basis that clarifies the possible transformation of the probable accumulative into a certainty.
Upon this, it was possible to introduce an inductive experimental method capable of covering all fields of knowledge. The reference of reason and precedent mental knowledges remain prevalent and where certainty cannot be reached without, by any type of inference.

It is worth mentioning that the experimental trend in inference is not incidental, as referred to, nor it is a contrast to Aristotle's logic, but this logic actually states the significance of both the induction and the experiment.

[1] Ibid, pp469-470.

Martyr al-Sadr quoted several excerpts on this issue, such as his references to Avicenna and al-Toussi in his elucidation of the logic of "al-Isharaat", to al-Razi in his commentary on the elucidation of "al-Isharaat" and to al-Sabzawi in his "Manthoumah".

He introduced for such by saying:

"We thereby realize that Aristotle's logic while corroborating in some of its texts that a deficient induction does not benefit a knowledge, it confirms in another field that experiment is useful for knowledge. He means by useless deficient induction the numerous accumulation of examples without adding any prior rational principle; and, by useful experiment an example that if were subjected to a prior rational principle and a logical measure could prove causality out of the total."[1]

On this basis, the seventeenth century has certainly been a qualitative turning point, not in the formation of the experimental method as being endorsed, but in increasing the relevant concern in proportion to the retreating role of the church as a natural consequence of its course. This mounting concern was also accompanied by further achievements in the theoretical practice and the formulating of foundations and basics that became applicable in the practical practice. This resulted in an industrial revolution unmatched in the human history, neither in its positive nor negative influences. One of the most negative impacts was the intensified assault on the method. The second qualitative transition in intensifying the experimental method was launched by John Stuart Mill in the nineteenth century. It was a natural evolution of the transition started by Francis Bacon in the seventeenth century and corresponded to the widely spread materialism in channels of

[1] Ibid, pp32-33.

governance and in common orientation, not only in Europe and its colonies but also around the world.

In the texts of the experimental doctrine in general, the excessive abandoning of the unseen and consequently the rational – where the unseen cannot be denied but by abandoning the rational commitments- exposed the psychological basis that constituted for the experimentalists' rational basis. It is with deep sorrow that we fail to sense the impact of the materialistic method by continuing to refer to its texts and facts, though in good intention, when we should strictly be avoiding its trap.

v. Oneness vs. Multiplicity

Can we consider multiple methods and research techniques as multiple conceptions or multiple credibility?

Do the various methods discussed earlier basically possess one truth? And, is the contrast due to the various fields of research and the use of several tools?

In examining the definitions of the methods we can arrive at the denominator that is ‘ideology upon rational regulations’. This, in fact, is the meaning of the word ‘method’.

The denominator refers to the various expressions used, such as the program, the leading path, a class of rules, research technique, defined means, regulated steps, a group of general rules, the straight path, a set of rules and regulations, launching base, etc. All these definitions refer to the ideological trend as long as reason is their reference and their objective is to reach from the known to the unknown, or yet shifting reason in between. Such trend in the experimental field is different in its tools and manifestation, though not in its essence, from the techniques employed for [traditional] texts and reported narrations. The difference could reach an extent where it implies a different method, although it is not so.

Dr al-Fadhli analyzed the methodology set by Stuart Mill - known for his leading role in the experimental method- and referred the analysis by evidence and proof to rational rules that Aristotle and others had earlier spoken of.

Dr. al-Fadhli says:

“The laws of induction set by John Stuart Mill on regulating the operations of experimental research to lead into sound

results and true scientific knowledge, as defined in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2/470-471, ed.1, 1984, were:

1. Method of Agreement
2. Method of Difference
3. Method of Concomitant Variations
4. The Joint Method of Agreement and Difference
5. Method of Residues

He gives a detailed explanation summarized in the following:

1. Stuart Mill in setting his five previously mentioned laws has built on the principle of causality and the principle of equability in events.
2. His method of agreement refers to: correlation in existence between the cause and the effect. That is, once the cause there the effect.
3. His method of difference refers to: correlation in nonexistence between the cause and the effect. That is, if never the cause none the effect. Or, without a cause there is no effect.
4. The joint method of agreement and difference denotes that should the cause exist then so the effect, and should it exist not then so not the effect.
5. The method of concomitant variants: Any change in the cause necessarily take place in the effect.
6. The method of residues: The cause of one thing may not concurrently be the cause of another thing that is different."[1]

Between reason and method

Sound methodology is not other than straight logical thinking. This means that the method in principle is one of man's existential necessities and instinctive core. Man can

[1] Ibid, pp54-62, in brief.

either observe his natural faculty in his systematic thinking to reach sound results, or decline to do so and end up with a different result. Here, we must ponder at this 'spontaneous method' earlier cited. It means that man exercises methodology automatically and in a spontaneous way. This does not denote sound results at all, but refers specifically to the instinctive state of methodology, which could not be observed right and thereby leading into invalid results.

"This was pointed to in 'Logique de Port Royal: Introduction', saying: A sound mind is capable of reaching the truth within the range of one's conducted research without prior knowledge of the rules of inference."[1]

This observation intends only to point to the non-methodological false accusation that labels methodology as one product by late researchers. Methodology, in all its components, characteristics and tools, is an instinctive quality and the basis of methodological thought and its general rules have been associated to man as inherent has been reason.

According to 'believers' who strictly see that there may be no belief in the fundamentals of religion without evidence and proof, this can only show that everyone can think with sound methodology to reach sound results in the most important issues and most particular. How is it conceivable, then, that monotheism is instinctive yet unattained instinctively? Moreover, what does monotheism by nature mean other than its spontaneous attainment by those who resort to thought and join the rational?

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[1] Ibid, p51, on the Emergence of philosophical ideology in Islam, 1/35, quoted from "Logique De Port Royal Introduction".

The dividing method

The presence of several divisions in the method requires the presence of a divider. That is, the presence of multiple credibility requires a defined conception applicable to all.
Is the method the divider or the conception?
Is the rational method both the divider and the conception?
Is reaching a result in a scientific way one part of the connotation of the word 'method', or is the 'method' inclusive and larger than its access and other elements?
I do not think that anyone would adopt the second view. The method is not inclusive, but is the clear or leading path, or possibly the adherence to certain rules. Scientific and rational ways are one constituent of the method and together they define a method as one in comparison to what is not a method.

Accordingly, the "rational method" is the divider of all method divisions, whether explicitly described as rational or not.
Should one say that the rational method is the enactment of methodology in rational and logical fields, the answer will be: This can only confirm that the source of the error is in defining the method by its field of practice. The right answer is that we should look for the definition of the method apart from its field.
This leads towards the next question:
What is the truth of this method that is acknowledged to rational fields? Is it in its essence different than what is acknowledged to other fields of knowledge?
At this point, we cannot agree to the prevailing understanding that the rational method is the divider of all method divisions unless we incline to a loose and unjustified toleration. When

the focus is the ‘method’, such toleration can only lead into a grave, far-reaching methodological flaw where balances reverse and acknowledged scientific method becomes opposite to sound scientific method and the rational method implies that other methods lack rationalism, and thereby, the metaphysical method becomes in contrast with the rational, although the two share one source. Eventually, the experimental method alone becomes the allegedly claimed rational method.

The solution lies in defining our terminology methodologically with scientific accuracy. When we try to do so, we find that all method divisions and classifications must have their methodology judged as per conductivity, transparency and reliability according to bases of their rational rules, on which they base and lead back. We find that these rational rules never exceed the frame defined in ‘Logics’ when looking up essential science and theoretical science - and particularly when we look up ‘insight’.

Sheikh al-Mudthaffar says:
"We know from the above that insight, or thought, denotes a rational processing of present information to reach the desired result. The desired is knowledge of the unknown, and more punctually, thought is the shift between the known and the unknown.”
To analyze this, when man deals with a problem (the unknown) by use of his mind and realizes what kind of unknown it is, his mind jumps to information already in possession that are appropriate to the type of the problem. He then processes and organizes it until the suitable information for a solution is composed. The problem if managed and

could the compiled information lead to the objective, reason can then sort out the desired solution. The analysis reason goes through includes five phases:

1. Confront the problem (the unknown).
2. Know what type the problem is, (reason could confront the problem without knowing what kind it is).
3. The mind moves from the problem to the stored information.
4. The mind moves again between one information and another, examining and compiling those suitable for the problem and its solution.
5. The mind moves again from the compiled known information to the desirable.

The last three steps are known as 'thought' or 'insight' and render the meaning of the shift of reason between the known and the unknown. The human mind processes these five steps at the blink of an eye and that is why it is known that thought is an instinctive human faculty."

He added:
"Intuition can spare the first two steps and lead straight from the known to the unknown. A person with strong intuition receives knowledges and sciences faster. Therefore, intuition is considered an inspiration of a first degree."[1]

All rational rules in control of the method base on the fourth and the fifth steps and on relevant adherence. To clarify this, research is the result of the confrontation of a problem in pursuit of a sound answer. The type of the problem must be identified, whether it were a natural phenomenon or a

[1] Al-Mudthaffar, Sheikh Muhammad Ridha, *al-Manteq (Logic)*, Ed.3, Dar al-Ta'aruf, Beirut, pp23-24.

reported issue. If phenomenal, it should be defined as either common or uncommon. If reported, it should be defined whether narrative, historical or poetic, and so on.
After defining the problem, we move to stored information. If not sufficient, we rationally supply reason with further information. This is followed by the supply stage of tools. Here, tools for experimental research largely vary from those for traditional research, but the reference judging the validity of either is reason that refers the experimental to the lab, for example, and the traditional to references on authority of narrators and authenticity of narratives. The controls that govern the adoption of laboratory or authenticity of narrators are the same in not relying on false references, else they would be in contrary to scientific findings, in all fields of knowledge without exception.
This is followed by the conclusion stage, also governed by the rational that should be adhered to and not overridden.

The method is an adherence to rational rules in all phases of the mental shift between the known and the unknown. And, since shifting in the first three stages is less prone to error it is crucial to yield to reason in the next phases.
I have thereby defined the method earlier as 'the research conducted under the guidance of rational rules in order to reach results'. All method definitions refer to such rules when addressing the general rules, research organizing or the like.

The method, that is always rational, has room for all tools employable within. This was also applied by 'Muslim logicians' when they "added the five techniques set by John Stuart Mill – known as "ways of Induction' or 'Laws of

Induction'- to the chapter on Induction in many modern writings on logic and in other chapters they found suitable."[1] This reveals that the new approaches brought by Bacon and later by Mill, although significant, were only limited to tools and thereby not qualifying for a methodological foundation.

Unity of Method

The above concludes the following:

1. When we note that there is a common title among all sorts of research in all fields of knowledge, known as 'the transition of thought from the known to the unknown', we cannot but accept the unity of the method. However, when we absorb ourselves in the details our vision becomes blurred and we only rest to bright titles.

2. When we show modesty and respect reasons of others we realize that earlier generations were not trapped in methodological void until the time of Bacon, Mill or others. We should respect the contributions made by all scholars and evaluate their work by reason and science, weighing the bright knowledge that they had brought yet without allowing such weighing to exceed the field of competence.

3. This one method can be applicable in any field of knowledge. The gaps left by the method itself can be filled up with suitable tools in a methodological rationalism. This however does not justify naming the method after its tools out of toleration that resulted in

[1] Al-Fadhli, *Usool al-Bahth*, Ibid, p53, referring to his manuscript on logic, Introduction, bibliography.

confusion. We can only break out of such confusion by realizing that the word ‘method’ refuses to be other than rational, unless the discussion is on the false method.

4. Accordingly, we can name method divisions as many as we desire, provided that we use the following theme: Traditional rational method; Experimental rational method; Survey rational method, and so on.

5. The difference is most pronounced in term of the metaphysical rational method, that totally reverses the alleged contradiction between the rational and the metaphysical methods. Here, we are led towards research in metaphysics by resorting to reason adhering to its rules to avoid falling into renunciation of reason claiming that the visible world is the entire objective reality; or, renunciation of reason with no distinction between the metaphysical (the unseen) and the mythical by nullifying the rational sense of validation. The latter sense is the rational method endorsed for verification in the field of metaphysics. This is why it is also known as the metaphysical rational method.[1]

[1] This reveals that method classification reported in the second list is based on toleration because the classifier is known for his defense of the inclusive range of the rational method, as quoted within this study in respect to the experimental method. It is also clear that the method could refer to inference at certain occasions or to rules applied by a researcher in order to explore reality, as quoted by Allamah Kamal al-Haidari. The method that degrades to the level of technical tools to tune the writing is not any different than other methods except in the field of research that requires certain type of tools and ordinary effort if compared to others. The difference is also clear in assuming three kinds of methods, the rational as independent, the textual (traditional) and the Irfanic. Should

6. As there are two paths - the good and the evil, and the two states - the right and the wrong, so is the case with the method. There are two methods only, the rational and the non-rational. The latter aims to nullify reason and wade far in ignorance. Ignorance has restricted itself to the tangible and judged what is beyond as nihility. This imposes a certain approach towards the facts of the self, society and universe that is in contrast with the reason –the reason that governs by the law of causality in the least- and forces it to adopt an objective reality consisting of the world of the matter and base all its thoughts accordingly.

   In this materialistic approach lies the death of reason, and there it is buried, so that the materialists may continue their search away from the method, hiding under the so-called 'materialistic method' that can only be rendered as the 'no method'. Based on toleration, the method has been confined to two -a rational and a materialistic, although this is more a contrast than a definition.

7. The Infallibles in establishing the bases for the rational method and setting up its foundations have allowed for mankind to enjoy the blesses of its outcome to date. Further discussion will follow in the next chapter.

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the textual and the Irfanic be non-rational, then what justifies reference to them? This is based without doubt on toleration albeit the result.

Chapter 2

At the threshold of the Infallible

Infallibility and the Creation of Man

Man’s free will

Knowledge is the utmost value in human life unequalled by any other value. It comes yet in classes pertaining to the subject around which issues of such knowledge are about. The knowledge about inanimate beings is not similar in class to that on animal life, nor is knowledge on man’s anatomy similar in class to knowledge about man’s soul, mind and heart. The latter is the paramount class of knowledge within its pursuit for the truth of existence and its subdivisions. It is knowledge, by far, that guarantees the accomplished integration of man.

A scholar with expertise in a high field of knowledge may either be a man of theory not of practice or a man of both theory and practice. In the first case, we face a case of rational schizophrenia; whereas in the latter we find a complete man. When knowledge is associated with deed the highest levels of humanity are then demonstrated. It is for such completeness of humanity that angels prostrate to God for His mighty creation. This cannot be perceived upon the scale of justice unless the attainment of such high level is made possible to all individuals of the human race should they employ ‘choice’ to ascend to such destination. This requires that man is created with an ability to choose and to employ such ability negatively or positively. The test is set on equal opportunity and success is attained when deed is combined with knowledge. For this unique characteristic, it was within the divine desire to create a creation that possessed two qualities:

1. The ability to reach sublimity that no other creation can reach –not even Angels, the best of creation.
2. The ability to reach such sublime status by own choice - although due to structure, such choice is harder for angels and thereby distinction is gained justly by merit.

Apparently, potential success embeds and is accompanied by potential failure, for all ranks of failure are ranks of unsuccess.
The principle of an attainable sublimity by man's choice certainly embeds the opposite. The latter is not the objective but a definite result of failing to reach the target.

An academic institution from which excellent students graduate is the same institution from which masses of non promising students graduate. This is due to justice and association of results with choice. Justice requires that success is made available to all, whereas results demonstrate the associated real scholastic and actual progress. Choice necessitates the need for available requisites, else, choice would be null. For students to succeed by their own choice, all potentials for success must be provided by the administration in order to contribute to the facilitation of the scholastic task and to yield the desired results. This cannot be achieved except within a system that defines what should be done and what should be avoided, provided that the system is applicable to all. Nevertheless, we definitely find excellence accompanied by failure, though the latter is not the objective at all. Requisites, including the system, cannot prevent failure but can shrink its circle. The more particular the test is the harder the control of failure. The same applies to man as a creation with a free will.

Man shares with Angels the possession of mind -the secret for success with optional compliance. Man shares with animals the possession of instinct but with the ability to control it. The possession of both reason and the instinct produces a creature with a free will, able to employ all its instincts in directing its choices and thereby degrading to lower than beasts; or, able to use its mind, guided by its light to direct all its instincts and thereby upgrading to higher, in honour, than angels. Man as a creature with a free will can choose either to succeed or to fail, and thus: "*And that man hath only that for which he [strives] maketh effort*" [53:39].

God Almighty ensured the provision of all requisites for man to make a good choice and introduced the means that enable the achievement of best results, including the system as shall be demonstrated.

Free will is thereby the core essence of humanity. In looking deeper, man was made a successor in the earth whilst possessing the characteristics required and endowed for such unique honouring. The divine desire to make man a creature with a choice, able to take or leave, can be summarised in the following -however this does not deny that there is an illusion that assumes that choice is deprived:

1. Within the divine creation of man, Godhood does not denote a disabling of free will. It has been stated in particular that man has been created with free choice.[1]

[1] See verses and interpretation. "There is no compulsion in religion" [02:256]; "And guide him to the parting of the two ways" [90:10]; "And if thy Lord had willed, He verily would have made mankind one nation" [11:118], Mizan 10/126; "And if We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance" [32:13], Tafsir Mizan 16/253; "Had Allah willed,

2. The divine pre-knowledge of individuals' pursuit does not denote coercion nor disabling of free will. Relevant texts should thereby be comprehended within this understanding, as such referred to in the honourable hadith: "The wretched is but wretched in his mother's womb and the blessed is but blessed in his mother's womb".[1]
3. The notion of God's creation of man and his deeds as revealed in "*When Allah hath created you and what ye make*" [37:96][2] does not signify coercion. A man commissioned with a mission is responsible for the act and the accomplishment, whether or not it was carried out. Although the mandator orders the mission and provides for its requisites, he together with the commissioner are responsible. However, the former is not liable for how the latter carries out the mission nor should the latter decide to follow a different approach. The latter might also employ the means made available but in a different manner.
4. The fact that "the affair/command is between two" (predestined vs. empowered; *jabr and tafweedh*) does not denote a disabling of free will. It rather means that a creature with a free will is, first, a creature with substantial need for his creator and, second, his choice is bound by a limit and controlled by factors emerging

they had not been idolatrous" [06:107], Mizan 7/313;. "And if thy Lord willed, all who are in the earth would have believed together" [10:99], Mizan 11/64.

[1] Honourable hadith cited in this context by al-Huwayzi, Tafsir al-Thaqalayn Vol.7/18. Sh. Agha Dhiyaa al-Iraqi said: it is interpreted that the divine knowledge encompasses the destiny of individuals consequent to their freely chosen pursuit. Nihayat al-Afkar, research essays, Vol.1/1.

[2] See study by al-Tabatabai, Mizan, 9/191-194.

> from within his own choice. For instance, a person opting for drug-trafficking is subject to legal persecution that restricts his freedom and thereby his choices. The reason for such constraint is but his own ill choice.[1]

On affirming the fundamental principle of free will, it is asserted that man is created as a free creature since there is no sense in having a free will without being free to will and where granting a free will is contrary to the prohibition of the freedom to will. Thereby, free will and freedom are two sides of one single truth.

Free will requisites

Following the assertion of the principle we realise the essential association between free will and knowledge. A free will cannot be exercised without choices and so choices cannot be attainable without knowledge. The extent of available knowledge reveals the same of freedom and choice. The farther the outreach the richer the rational action and choice and the more revealed the fulfilment of the principle.[2]

Knowledge does not take its real dimension by plain instructing and receiving. It is based on trial and conclusion, that is, the competence of thought and the ability to employ its capacity in reaching the desired field of knowledge.

In this context there arises the discussion on reason that is associated in the first place with the discussion on free will, freedom, knowledge and thought. There is no sense in

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[1] Ibid; also in S. al-Khoei, Bayan, 86-6; S. Mustafa Khumaini, Interpretation of Quran, *Miftah Ahsan al-Khaza'en al-Ilahiyah*, ed..1, 1418 AH.

[2] See al-Mizan, 1/116, the verse "*And He taught Adam all the names*".

discussing 'free will' and 'freedom' apart from 'mind' as the former two when lacking the latter tend to transform into negligence, absurdity and renunciation. In addition, there is no use in discussing knowledge apart from thought, else we would be arguing a machine that stores and receives. Yet, knowledge in its essence is a fact that is radically different. As cited earlier, there is no sense for thought without mind. It is reason that keeps the integrity of thought by allowing the latter to travel in the world of information and onwards to the unknown, step by step and phase by phase and all along while following the conveying rational rules. It is here where we find that man is free, possessing both a free will and the ability to know. This ability is made possible with the presence of reason –reason that is crucial in attaining such qualities and in shielding them from the risks that surround.

The sequence where the discussion on reason evolves, although emerging while arguing the free will of man, does not conflict with the qualitative distinction of the issue. The comparable position of mind to free will equals that of private to public and invisible to visible. This denotes that a creation with a free will is subject to its unique possession of reason. Although this calls for a different order in the discussion on reason and free will it is to note that "God first Created reason"[1]. Yet, this creation was within the scheme of creating a man with a free will whose will is but built on the presence of reason as an essential requisite. This is not fulfilled unless the system is applicable to everyone with no exception. To corroborate that such a system is not optional, a number of terms indisputably agreed as requisites do in fact entail and urge for the presence of a system that is required

[1] Honourable Hadith, see Majlesi, Bihar al-Anwar, 1/97.

for both the thought and the conduct. This, in turn, conveys that freedom necessary for free will is demonstrated in two aspects: theoretical choice and practical choice. The first aspect calls for certain standards to regulate the process of thought and are represented within rational basics, defined in Chapter 1 as the 'method' that can deliver the sound results. As for the second aspect, a 'law' is required to guarantee freedom and to ensure that freedom does not turn into a damaging tool, particularly that the discussion is on 'civil' man by nature and thereby referring to man in the 'collective' rather than the 'individual', or yet the individuals who form a group.

It is worth noting that the discussion on 'choice' when put within the collective frame is radically different than when put within the individual's. This is similar to man's free choice and action within his own space that diminishes in option once shared by a group. The less available choices do not conflict with the fact that an individual's option is based on being a 'civilian' who cannot do without his own race.
This point in particular is where concepts on freedom, within the common understanding that embeds relinquishment, differ from freedom as the utmost value for all humans rather than for the individual.

Requisites of a free will can thereby be summarized in the following:

1. Freedom, in both theoretical and practical notions.
2. The potential for knowledge building, including thought.
3. The mind as an essential constituent for free will where choice becomes a virtue -since there is no sense

in having choice without value, and as a judging basis for the requisites of free will and its practices.

4. Order, including methodological rules and laws that ensure freedom for all.

The objective of these requisites is the splendid human knowledge, not an alleged knowledge that is only an rational schizophrenia or yet worse -as described in "*They are but as the cattle - nay, but they are farther astray*" [25:44].

Position of infallibility

In examining the position of infallibility in the above discussion we find some relevant indications to the infallible as the apex of man completeness by joining between knowledge and deed and by embodying within the deed the possession of knowledge. This is based on the rule that infallibility is associated with ultimate good choice, mind completion and system compliance in both theory and practice. This renders the constant option for truth (opting for God) where the person resorts to God and takes refuge in.[1] Infallibility in being so has qualified the infallible to act as the guide and the leader, setting the example and resembling a role model.

A rector is selected from a number of qualified professors. Should he be the most suitable for the post then his selection becomes with all the more reason. A rector or a dean might give great concern to issues of a further interest, such as the

[1] See linguistic meaning of infallibility [as resorting to God, Issmah] in Sheikh al-Mufid, Aw'el al-Maqalat, p134-135, p164. S. Tabatabi, al-Mizan, Vol II, p.156.

design of the campus and the layout of programs and plans as per his distinguished expertise.

While man is incapable of anticipating the future, God Has the knowledge of what will be along the span of all times. There is no wonder that the divine planning of human future has given consideration to the associated beginning and end. The entire epistemic entity along all eras and ages is a unique system of value where knowledge has taken its natural place even before creation. And, it is within God's knowledge that His creation shall pursue such a system of knowledge up to the utmost extent and by free will to reach sublimity.

The discussion on lights surrounding the divine throne before creation is not any different in this respect. In light of this understanding the relevant hadith and its connotations should be addressed and comprehended accordingly, as discussed under 'The Text'.

It is essential to notice that the above links with infallibility, where infallibility in itself is the divine means made available to those fulfilling the necessary requisites, starting with making a good choice and abiding by and safeguarding of freedom and carrying on with certainty to access the world of the unseen -passing through the completeness of mind and the completion of knowledge that is usually within the reach of man. This becomes obvious when potentials are made available to someone in charge yet beyond their own capacities. For example, a physician becoming a minister of public health is equipped with services and means that surpass his own abilities in order to facilitate the carrying out of his duties.

The 'first' ruler in the world of the 'matter or object' has access to a 'nuclear bag' that enables him destroying an

entire continent with the push of a button. He is briefed continuously on satellite global reports.

What, therefore, are the means that the divine justice has provided for the infallible who was entrusted as reference for angels and all people within the laid out and commanded frames?
It is worth noting that the means circle around knowledge and information. The infallible obtains a sort of knowledge of the facts of things. It is this knowledge that has qualified the Infallible, by his free will, to reach sublimity that can in principle be reached by all humans.

The above is a brief illustration of the position of infallibility and the Infallible. Further details on the issue will follow in the next pages.

I. Infallibility and Reason

Infallibility is associated with the theoretical and practical completeness of reason. This conveys that the Infallible signifies culmination in the recognition of truth and abidance by its viable course. Within the deed of the infallible there appears no failure in application compared to theory, for the two are fairly correlated.
This particularity is what makes the infallible take the lead in order for mankind to follow suit led by such guidance. It is to note that infallibility is possible for each human individual.
In looking for the prime dilemma of humanity, that is almost chronic and incurable, we find a problem in practice rather than in knowledge. Although the latter does exist, yet the most significant and of a wider impact is the practical application of attained knowledge and the filling up of the gap between theory and practice and what we know compared to what we make. Should the reader consider the problem to include the knowledge part -where knowledge is then a victim- it becomes critical to agree that the actual dimension of the problem lies in the non-teaming up between knowledge and application or between learning and doing. This reveals the significance of the infallible in the social orientation process and, in turn, lines the notion of infallibility, as with all issues of religion, with an eternal cultural value of modernism.

The completeness of reason makes possible the correlation between knowledge and action. This allows the infallible an approach towards the practical course whilst maintaining the right path of reason. Reason becomes a pure mind that carries

the purest emotion and the latter is then placed on its right course.

This leads towards a number of facts that include:

- The integrity of the method: This is a pure rational affair, due to the fact that reason possesses its own opinion even with respect to tools.
- The relative position of mind to religion: When mind is the origin in the prophet's closeness to absolute truth then religiousness is determined in favour of reason where religiousness is associated whether in its presence or nihility.

Mind and prophethood, yet infallibility, are two sides of one truth, that is, pretext, evidence and proof.

"God provided two manners for persuasion, a visible and an invisible. The visible [is demonstrated] in messengers, prophets, and imams, whereas the invisible [is sensed] in reasons."[1]

A persuasion if remained incomplete without reason then so it remains without the applicable embodiment. When persuasion is applicable it delivers certainty to both reason and the heart and protects the latter two from all obstructions hindering their normal growth.

The message of prophets and their trustees is one: The mind. That is, to use reason and follow its guidance and to avoid the illusion of reason and its misleading confusion. Between the guidance of reason and the inclination of the soul is the summary of mankind's journey in the earth:

[1] Al-Majlessi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol.1, P. 137.

"*But when there come unto you from Me a guidance, then whoso followeth My guidance, he will not go astray nor come to grief*" [20:123]
"*So follow not passion lest ye lapse..*" [04:135]
"*.. and follow not desire that it beguile thee from the way of Allah*" [38:26]

The dilemma that prophethood was faced with, starting with the very first man who was also the first prophet, originated from yielding to the non-rational and non-scientific conclusion and falling for passion represented in custom, precedents and invented opinion such as the favourable regard and the wonderment. Prophets had always asserted the need for resorting to reason, dialogue and establishment of proof. This in fact describes in short the objective of their mission.

Imam Ali (as) says: "Then Allah sent His Messengers and series of His prophets towards them to get them to fulfil the pledges of His creation, to recall to them His bounties, to exhort them by preaching, to unveil before them the hidden virtues of wisdom.."[1]

The mission of the prophets was to motivate the guidance of reason and the straightening of the diverted passion, whereas the mission of those who stood and are still standing in defiance of the Infallible has been in denunciation of reason,

[1] Nahj Al-Balaghah. Sh. Hassan Zadah Ali, Quran, Irfan and Burhan, Persian, Ed. 3, P. 44. Also in Ibn Abi al-Hadeed, Sharh-ul-Nahj, Vol.1, P.23, Sermon One. (Peak of Eloquence, English translation by Askari Jafri)

yet in the name of reason, in denunciation of realism by claiming realism and in renunciation of objectivity by pretending to be objective.

The mind enjoys a unique status in the religious text. Al-Kilini says: "I begin my book with a Chapter on the Mind, the virtues of knowledge and the high rank of scholars; the inferiority of ignorance and the vileness of its people and lowness of their standing. The mind is but the pole for the orbit, the one that argues and is rewarded and punished."[1]

In his book, al-Kilini reports this first narrative: "Imam al-Sadeq (as) said: When God Created reason, He endowed it with the ability to speak. Then God said: Approach! The mind approached. Then, God said: Turn away! The mind turned away. God said: By My Might and Glory, I Have Created no favourable creation to Myself but thee and Have not Made thee complete but in what is favourable to Myself. It is but thee that I Command, Forbid, Penalise and Reward."[2]

The constants of reason and the opposite method

The invariables of reason asserted by the infallibles can be defined in the following points:

1. The genuineness of the Creator and the dignity of mankind.
2. Existence (objective reality) is larger than the worldly life.
3. Denial and proof are subject to evidence.

In the opposite, the basics for materialism -erroneously described as the materialistic method, base on the following:

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[1] Al-Kilini, al-Kafi, Vol. 1, P.9.

[2] Ibid, p.10.

1. Man as an origin, where man is the master of universe and the scale to which facts should fit and be consistent with.
This notion results in wonderment and arrogance leading into haughtiness and insolence and eventually into Korah's principle, as revealed in: "*Only by force of knowledge I obtained it*" [39:49], and where the Pharaoh's code appears in: "*I am your Lord the Highest*" [79:24].

2. Believing in the tangible only and thereby constraining the objective reality and its extended consequences within.
This is the usual basis upon which faith in the Unseen is denied, including the Afterlife. This logic controls the thinking of those who yield to it, limiting and restricting their search and contemplative ability to a tight circle in which they try to subject much larger issues to such small mentality. The consequent failure in approaching the issues with limited means leads the person into making a judgment of denial. In this context the verses say: "*And Pharaoh said: O chiefs! I know not that ye have a god other than me, so kindle for me (a fire), O Haman, to bake the mud; and set up for me a lofty tower in order that I may survey the god of Moses; and lo! I deem him of the liars*" [28:38].

3. Refutation of wonderment and favourable regard.
There are times when failing to present a contradicting proof to what is perceived becomes a proof in itself to assert denial. Yet, there are times when wonderment at what is perceived becomes a proof of its own truth. There is no doubt that the latter case is worse and embeds the first within as well. A scale built on the 'mood' is quite common, such as revealed in the verses: "*Maketh he the gods One Allah? Lo! that is an*

astounding thing" [38:05]; and, "*We heard not of this in the case of our fathers of old*" [23:24].

Such basis of ideologies is not confined within one age of time but rather constitutes for the wide-spreading materialistic 'method' in our times, extending to many Islamic circles and smouldering with its flames the rational method into materialistic ash disguised as rational.

Should we not review with detail the characteristics of the so-called method opposite the infallible method we will then fail to approach the access to infallibility that is based on a mind free of impurities and of the clamour of materialism.

In the most evident jurisprudent concepts, we may still find ourselves unable to believe in the principles of religion without proof and evidence, let alone when proof is lacking and evidence is barren. The confusion between a rational method and another could gravely escalate to an extent that would block the path to the truth including access to the Infallible who is the utmost demonstration of that truth.

For this reason in particular the mission of the prophets focused on awakening reasons and resorting to evidence to establish proof. Else, no secrets of existence would be attained.

In this context, I wish to substantiate the correlation between reason and the Infallible and put an end to the falsity of an alleged opposite position of the rational mind to the Infallible and to religion in general. Humanity has not learned the rational method but by the guidance of the Infallible. It is such a slander to strip those who have set up the basis of the rational method out of their accomplishment. And, it is yet such a false accusation in presuming that the Creator of

reason Has left mankind and prophets go astray in ignorance whilst the foundation for methodology was left to be devised by those yielding to inclination.

It is worth mentioning that reason and yet the rational method are in fact the 'balance' and the 'measure' referred to in the Holy Quran, associated with the 'Book' in some verses and with 'the creation of the sky' in others:
"*Allah it is Who hath revealed the Scripture with truth, and the Balance*" [42:17];
"*And the sky He hath uplifted; and He hath set the measure, That ye exceed not the measure, But observe the measure strictly, nor fall short thereof*" [55:07-09].

It is quite noticeable that the reference to the creation of Earth comes directly next, in the verse: "*And the earth hath He appointed for (His) creatures*" [55:10]. This indicates that 'observing the measure' to which the verse refers to is not the same as 'giving full measure and full weight' in material scales as referred to in another issue.[1]
It should be observed that the science of balance is in fact the science of logic, as reported by Avicenna[2] and as quoted by al-Sabzawi in his verse line:

This is the balance rightfully scaled … by which religion is duly weighed[3]

The second chapter in Ayatullah Sheikh Hassan Zadah Aameli's book (referred to in the footnote) discussed the methodology utilized by Sadr-ul-Muta'alliheen in deriving

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[1] As quoted by S. Al-Tabatabai' in Tafsir al-Mizan.
[2] Ibid, p.9.
[3] Ibid, p.41, reported in al-Le'ali.

the five logical balances in the Holy Quran. He added that "I have summarized his discussion so that it may be learnt that the logic of revelation is the absolute proof."[1]

The inerrant text deeply refers to proof as much as to reason and balance, such as in:

1. "*O mankind! Now hath a proof from your Lord come unto you, and We have sent down unto you a clear light*" [04:174]
2. "*He who crieth unto any other god along with Allah hath no proof thereof. His reckoning is only with his Lord. Lo! disbelievers will not be successful*" [23:117]
3. "*Or have they chosen other gods beside Him? say: Bring your proof (of their godhead). This is the Reminder of those with me and those before me, but most of them know not the Truth and so they are averse*" [21:24]
   Herein, when we note that the prophet's mission is to remind, "*Remind them, for thou art but an admonisher*" [88:21], we can conclude that the intended meaning of '*those with me and those before me*' refers to the mission of all prophets that is based on establishing the proof and calling for it.
4. "*Is not He (best) Who produceth creation, then reproduceth it, and Who provideth for you from the heaven and the earth? Is there any God beside Allah? Say: Bring your proof, if ye are truthful*!" [27:64]

In conclusion, Sadr-ul-Muta'alliheen says: "Let us refer to narrative evidences on this requisite so that it is learned that both the religious rule and reason are in accordance in this

[1] Ibid, p.104-108, quoting from Mafateeh al-Ghayb and Asrar Al-Ayat.

matter as in all doctrinal rules. Rules of true Shari'ah are in no way in conflict with the necessary knowledge of certitude."[1]

The mission of the infallible as previously quoted in Imam Ali (as)' speech is the fulfilment of the covenant of nature – where nature stands as the basis for evidence, its climate and source of growth. Avicenna said in this regard: "This who is accustomed to believe without an evidence has but disengaged from the human nature."[2]

Since evidence is a produce rationally required by reason, it is normal that such produce correlates inseparably with the rational method, even if we failed to notice that natural sense (*fittrah*) and religiousness are born from one light, as in:
"*So set thy purpose for religion as a man by nature upright - the nature (framed) of Allah, in which He hath created man. There is no altering (the laws of) Allah's creation. That is the right religion, but most men know not*" [30:30].

It is also within the norm for the Infallible who addresses the rational aspects to fulfil the two theoretical and practical sides of the rational method. This, in turn, renders the meaning of infallibility where reason and the Infallible combine, as has long been asserted by senior scholars.

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[1] Ibid, p.30, quoting from Al-Asfaar, Vol.1, Ed.1, Chapter 2, Section 6, P.75.
[2] Ibid, p.11.

II. Infallibility and Free Will

Free will necessitates guidance

In asserting the free will's need for guidance this does not denote contradiction nor constraint to the exercise of such free will. Such guidance possibly stands as the only way to loosen the circle of free will to its maximum. This typical matter becomes clear when we consider, for example, the need of holders of bank accounts, or any account, for [a financial] advice given best by those with previous experience. The more reassuring the advice the closer the listening and willingness to comply. A man with a free will in his life journey is in need of an honest companion who has no interest other than offering the genuine advice in good faith, seeking no reward nor recognition.

An infallible is consequently the most apt to give advice, being well-informed of all facts, temptations and experiences, having had seen the affairs in their true image with the light of the right away from disguise and deceit and having had reached attested perfection in making good choices.

Advice in itself is not a balance that can be covered or compensated for along time but is rather the space between explicit loss and grand gain. It is the lifetime, reason, the heart, the spirit and is yet the soul. Failing in experiences makes one go astray, losing the deal and the trade. While whoso 'reckon doing good works' pay no attention to the fact that they are but among the 'greatest losers by their work'.

An advice is about a handful of earth full of a divine spirit that seeks to reach sublimity even beyond the reach or

imagination of angels to settle at a final abode "firmly established in the favour of a Mighty King". A free choice in exercising a free will is about opting to reach the lowest of the bottoms or the highest of the tops. An advice is about having the freedom to follow any path deemed desirable, the right path of rules, integrity, justice and intellect; or, the path of animal desires and the materialistic transformation of the human being.
Such free will can demonstrate in two manners: Freedom of thought and freedom of act. The need for the Infallible in exercising the freedom of thought is in guiding the selection of an rational method and in outlining the boundary for the theoretical practice of thought. As for the exercise of the freedom of act, there is need for the Infallible who stands as the sole legal expert in the most critical and crucial legal issues that necessarily require definite knowledge in the exercise of law that is applicable and bounding to everyone.

In this respect, there is need for pioneer leaders in the various fields of knowledge who can certainly serve the core needs of humanity. The closer the service to human needs the more significant the role played by the true teachers of humanity and consequently the closer adherence to their teachings. Leading scholars in the various fields are a few and the deeper the field of specialization the rarer the number.

It is in this context that the Infallibles become the most notable of all humans and the rarest in quantity compared to the astronomical figure of mankind. Yet, the Infallibles, each, have their own status. The highest rank ever attained is that of the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh & HF) whose rank in knowledge is not surpassed or reached by any close angel nor

messenger prophet. However, Infallibility does not imply superiority such as claimed by the royals and the nobles. It is not to be viewed with prior negativity but instead to be understood as a unique state of worship, modesty, clemency, mercy and grace. This is the quality that allows the Infallible to reach out for the people and serve their needs. This, in turn, confirms the Infallible's good choice in both theory and practice in setting the example in this respect.

Accordingly, infallibility is not only a matter of concern but a necessity in our lives. It does not bring benefit to the Infallible but is in fact a burden of responsibility that should be met [by people] with recognition and understanding to realize its blessings rather than be met with rejection. Infallibility should not draw aggression but bring joy for such a mercy.

Infallibility a mercy for humans

The need for an infallible rises as a testing ground for all humans. The test is 'free will', the core of human dignity. Infallibility in being unattained by everyone does not conflict with free will. Similarly, excellence and advanced knowledge are attained only by a few. The journey of the Infallible is not of benefit to himself. He instead makes the journey possible for the rest by means that would not have become available except through his guidance.

The good choice made by the Infallible comes in favour of man's dignity. It illustrates man's possible reach of sublimity beyond the imagination of any other creation and sheds the light on the highest ranks available for all people alike.

An absolute proof to this understanding can be concluded within God Almighty's answer to angels who sought to learn

the reason behind man's succession in the earth. God presented them with human examples that made Angles submit to evidence and realize that God Knows what they don't.[1]

The good choice made by the Infallible in exercising his free will does not only serve in leading him, but also opens the door wide for all people to make good choices while practising their free will. This can be achieved by:

1. Receiving a divine revelation that would benefit everyone.
2. The Infallible is to guide people in exercising their free will by:
    a. Receiving and presenting revelation;
    b. Clarifying the revelation and providing clear explanation;
    c. Explaining the meanings of revelation and divine rule, known as 'hadith, narratives'.
3. Setting an example that joins between knowledge and deed.
4. Confronting the pharaohs and tyrants who persist in seizing people's right of free will and who continue to enslave the nations. This shall be further discussed in detail under 'Infallibility and Freedom'.[2]

[1] See Sayed Tabatabi's research in Tafsir Al-Mizan on the Angles' inquiry, particularly the interpretation of the verse "*And He taught Adam all the names, then showed them to the angels*" [02:31].

[2] The discussion here refers to guidance followed by another on the removal of obstructions and hindering. Although the two overlap, the classification is more accurate.

The Infallible's mission

The Infallible's mission is described in conveying the message, such as referred to in the verse: "*Are the messengers charged with aught save plain conveyance (of the message)?*" [16:35]. Messengers, thereby, have a free will in opting for certain situations in which they would convey their message. God Almighty did not restrict or dictate any element that could weaken the messengers' free will. They were instead commanded to present the concept in the simplest way, resorting to the simplest means. It is within this trend that messengers while conveying the message acted as normal individuals among the poor and the weak with no fancies, riches or power. Also, power and riches largely strip off the free will of man and subject him to such influence.

God sought for His Prophet to use his pretext alone as an evidence, as referred to in the verse: "*And they say: What aileth this messenger (of Allah) that he eateth food and walketh in the markets?*" [25:07]. There is no showy adornment nor advertising or publicity. The media used in conveying the divine message is based on truth, logic and sense, not on allegation or fabrication.

In this context, prophets did not resort to many miracles. Such would accumulate to weaken the principle of free will. Instead, prophets tended to utilise miracles when were asked to. An excessive use of miracles that address the eyes and ears could reach a stage of delusion and could cancel reason. Miracles and signs are an exception, whereas the norm is in the conveying of the message, as clarified in the verse: "*And they say: Why are not portents sent down upon him from his*

Lord? Say: Portents are with Allah only, and I am but a plain warner." [29:50].

There is an abundant number of verses in the Holy Quran that speak about guidance in the exercise of free will. However, mentioning only a few clarifies that infallibility consolidates man's free will instead of confiscating or revoking it. A look at these verses shows that instructions given to messengers stressed on giving advice, guidance, preachment, admonishment, etc., and to observe free will to the fullest.
Warning is perhaps the only instruction that carries a sense of intensity though not in contrast with free will but as a further assertion of conveying the message and highlighting the consequent damage of violation. This is referred to in the verse: "*We send not the messengers save as bearers of good news and warners. Those who disbelieve contend with falsehood in order to refute the Truth thereby. And they take Our revelations and that wherewith they are threatened as a jest.*" [18:56].

Also, warning and preaching come in one context, as referred to in the verse: "*Say (unto them, O Muhammad): I exhort you unto one thing only: that ye awake, for Allah's sake, by twos and singly, and then reflect: There is no madness in your comrade. He is naught else than a warner unto you in face of a terrific doom.*" [34:46].[1]

[1] See more verses, such as: [02:275], [05:19]; [07:36, 07:63-69]; [11:75-79]; [20:173-174]; [23:66-67].

III. Infallibility and Freedom

The basic relationship between infallibility and freedom of man is found in the following:

1. The freedom of thought in order to arrive at the truth and embrace it, such as in "*There is no compulsion in religion..*" [02:256]. This refers to the fact that the infallibles are the leading figures in rational thought in its true meaning, not in the common trend.
2. The freedom of act in confrontation of the tyrants who restrained the freedom of people along history. In this respect, there has been no known confrontation other than the ones led by the Infallibles or their followers.
3. The affirmation of the principle of human dignity. The religious fiqh is the fiqh of man's dignity. There is no hope in freedom without an integrated educational structure based on dignity.

1. <u>Freedom of thought</u>:
Taking into consideration that free will and freedom are two sides of one truth and that the Infallible embodies the good choice, we find that the Infallible's closeness to God is within the circle of freedom. God wished to create free humans who would reach the highest rank such as attained by the Infallibles, the prophets and the best of all, Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh & Hf). This shall be discussed in detail under 'Infallibility and Knowledge'.[1]

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[1] Freedom of thought is more associated to knowledge than to freedom. The more the knowledge the more the convenient climate for sound thinking.

2. Freedom of act:
The Infallibles' confrontation with the tyrants was not limited to defiance of rulers, but also included all acts that sought to control people, from the simplest attempts of dominance to the highest extent of tyranny. The circle of confrontation expands to include 'corruption in the earth' that prevents the practical practice of freedom within the fundamental free will, either by the exercised excessive control or by the tolerated corruption and ethical disintegration that pollute the social environment.

The confrontation can be summarized in fighting three damaging practices: domination (enslavement), money and abomination. Consequences resulting from these three damaging practices are countless and have been quite common since the days of Cain and Abel.

1. Enslavement: This refers to the confrontation of all those who enslave others and conspire against their dignities. These include oppressive rulers and political, economic, military and security power centres, referred to as 'the chieftains and the affluent'. This also covers all influence utilised to gain authority even if disguised as religious, as referred to in the following verse: "*They have taken as lords beside Allah their rabbis and their monks and the Messiah son of Mary, when they were bidden to worship only One Allah. There is no God save Him. Be He Glorified from all that they ascribe as partner (unto Him)!*" [09:31].

a. Tyranny and exalting in earth: "*Lo! Pharaoh exalted himself in the earth and made its people castes. A tribe among them he oppressed, killing their sons and sparing their women. Lo! he was of those who work corruption. And We desired to show favour unto those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them examples and to make them the inheritors, And to establish them in the earth, and to show Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts that which they feared from them.*" [28:04-06].

b. Examples of tyranny and enslavement[1]: "*Dost thou not consider how thy Lord dealt with (the tribe of) A'ad, With many-columned Iram, The like of which was not created in the lands; And with (the tribe of) Thamud, who clove the rocks in the valley; And with Pharaoh, firm of might, Who committed inordinacy in the cities, And multiplied iniquity therein? Therefore thy Lord poured on them the disaster of His punishment. Lo! thy Lord is ever watchful.*" [89:06-14].

2. Manipulation of economic resources and sustenance.
   a. "*And Korah, Pharaoh and Haman! Moses came unto them with clear proofs (of Allah's Sovereignty), but they were boastful in the land. And they were not winners (in the race)*" [29:39].

[1] See explanation on crucifixion on four wedges practiced by Pharaoh of Moses, "*Now surely I shall cut off your hands and your feet alternately, and I shall crucify you on the trunks of palm trees.*." [20:71], al-Mizan, Vol.7/281.

Where Pharaoh's story is quite known, Haman assumed the post of the prime minister. He was a powerful figure in the ruling circles and had influence and control over financial assets. As for Korah, his role is revealed in the following verse.

b. "*Now Korah was of Moses' folk, but he oppressed them; and We gave him so much treasure that the stores thereof would verily have been a burden for a troop of mighty men. When his own folk said unto him: Exult not; lo! Allah loveth not the exultant*" [28:76].

Apparently, political money is capable of corruption, disguising under religion. The next verse refers to this issue.

c. "*O ye who believe! Lo! many of the rabbis and the monks devour the wealth of mankind wantonly and debar (men) from the way of Allah. They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, unto them give tidings (O Muhammad) of a painful doom*" [09:34].

Here, it is to mention that the infallibles fought against usury and the subsequent greed, blackmail and illegitimate fortune.

d. "*Those who swallow usury cannot rise up save as he ariseth whom the devil hath prostrated by (his) touch. That is because they say: Trade is just like usury; whereas Allah permitteth trading and forbiddeth usury. He unto whom an admonition from his Lord cometh, and (he) refraineth (in obedience*

thereto), he shall keep (the profits of) that which is past, and his affair (henceforth) is with Allah. As for him who returneth (to usury) - Such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein" [02:275].

e. "*And eat not up your property among yourselves in vanity, nor seek by it to gain the hearing of the judges that ye may knowingly devour a portion of the property of others wrongfully*" [02:188].
Another practice the Infallibles had to challenge and scold was the cheating in measure and weight that promoted 'technical' robbery and theft.

f. "*And unto Midian (We sent) their brother Shu'eyb. He said: O my people! Serve Allah. Ye have no other Allah save Him! And give not short measure and short weight. Lo! I see you well-to-do, and lo! I fear for you the doom of a besetting Day. And O my people! give just measure and weight, nor withhold from the people the things that are their due: commit not evil in the land with intent to do mischief.*" [11:84-85].
Here, it is to note that catering for the poor and the needy is closely related to providing the sound climate for free will and freedom. Sustenance and freedom are correlated as one basic necessity for a flourishing practice of free thought and free opinion.

3. The spread of abomination and fornication.
   a. "*Lo! Allah enjoineth justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbiddeth lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorteth you in order that ye may take heed*" [16:90].

b. "*If only there had been among the generations before you men possessing a remnant (of good sense) to warn (their people) from corruption in the earth, as did a few of those whom We saved from them! The wrong-doers followed that by which they were made sapless, and were guilty. In truth thy Lord destroyed not the townships tyrannously while their folk were doing right*" [11:116-117].

c. "*But seek the abode of the Hereafter in that which Allah hath given thee and neglect not thy portion of the world, and be thou kind even as Allah hath been kind to thee, and seek not corruption in the earth; lo! Allah loveth not corrupters*" [28:77].

d. "*Recite that which hath been inspired in thee of the Scripture, and establish worship. Lo! worship preserveth from lewdness and iniquity, but verily remembrance of Allah is more important. And Allah knoweth what ye do*" [29:45].

It is quite normal for social security to enhance and prosper under the rule of justice and within an economic infrastructure that caters to every individual, not in an environment that inflames the desires. The former trend opens the path wide for the activation of reason and is enlightened therein in all tracks of life, particularly when coming across critical curves.

Here, we conclude that infallibility took the lead in the confrontation of political and economic oppression and

the subsequent disintegration of the social structure that drives society deeper into corruption, frivolity and abomination. Such confrontation is but to secure the best climate for freedom that God Almighty desired for man away from injustice, aggression and restraints that burden the people and turn the best of their effort into a strife in a submissive living dominated by tyrants who seek to be 'taken as lords beside Allah'.

This clearly signifies within the infinite accumulated human experience and knowledge that the rising spirit of liberation of man in its origin and principle has been the focus of efforts made by the Infallibles along the centuries. The conceived illusive contradiction between religion and freedom is not but an inevitable result of failure in differentiating between the law of the jungle and the civil community and between the savage man and the human. In the former there is no limit to freedom and discipline is abhorred, whereas in the latter there is no conflict with freedom in compliance with the law and in observance to the system.

It is within the objective of religion to draw the boundaries that if crossed would jeopardize the freedom of man. It is also apparent for the pleasure-seeking individual to find such boundaries a constraint of freedom. This, in turn, is similar to those who resort to defraud to escape the law. It is to note that the spirit of abiding by the law is one of the hardest objectives within the social orientation process. Around the world, there is a majority amongst those who abide by the law who do so under the obligation to ward off any personal damage. However, once an opportunity arises they take advantage without any shame.

In light of the above, what is the perceived attitude towards the religious law? Would many non believers tend to abide by its rules, or would they tend to free themselves from such observance? Although the civil law applicable by authorities, if violated, imposes penalties and punishments, it is yet not met with presumed abidance. If the case is so, then how is a law that leaves punishment to conscience is expected to be well observed?

When we read or learn about the independence of the judiciary system and the respect of the law in one country, we would imagine –if we were not well informed, that the spirit of social discipline and reason have reached their perfection. This is about the civil law not the religious law. The two are not comparable. The latter is much wider with extensive discipline on observing or abandoning any act. The religious law is much wider because it addresses the building of man in flesh and soul for both the worldly life and the Afterlife.
The wider the circle of the law the smaller the circle of individual freedom that is based on freeing the self of every restraint. In looking closely at the function of the law we find that it sets restrictions and draws limits for the individual's unleashed freedom in favour of collective freedom to enable an established responsible and committed freedom for both the individual and the group.
This is the freedom that infallibility guaranteed to define and cherish as greatly valuable in achieving man's happiness. It is for such freedom that the Infallibles have entered into fierce confrontations until freedom became a

fundamental that is theoretically recognized by mankind and largely acknowledged, yet not reached in the practical aspect due to the large difference between theory and practice that requires accumulated experiences to bridge the gap and diminish the difference until it fades away. Freedom in this respect is similar to the law that represents the other side of the truth of freedom since the law is about the freedom of the civil man that cannot be achieved away from the law.[1]

3. Affirming the principle of human dignity:
The central point in this aspect is the difference between the origin of man and his dignity. This is followed by the difference between man's dignity as per his own course, even if he renounced his own human nature, and man's dignity as per human standards.
While writings of non-Islamists fall into the first fallacy in addressing 'the Man, the God', those put by Islamists suffer mostly from the second fallacy building on a Quranic origin, "*Verily we have honoured the Children of Adam*" [17:70], and building up in this context all the consequences of the first 'methodology'.
The discussion on dignity expands further until its boundaries vanish and dignity of man becomes the origin itself, all illusively attributed to the Quranic text.
Another reaction from some Islamists tends to go in a different direction to re-establish the boundaries for dignity away from its position and consequently minimizing the

[1] See studies on freedom by Allamah Al-Tabatabai' in Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol.1, p.186; Vol.2, p.151, 268, 342, Vol.3, p.248 and the core research in Vol.4, p.105-107, 127, 180, Vol.6, p.350, Vol.10, p.370, Vol.11, p.155, Vol.13, p.53, Vol.16, p.67.

circle until no further boundaries remain between man and animal.
This results in a strange mix up between people's obligated duty towards God and people's obligated duty towards each other with the inability to reach a clear perception that joins between the 'divine origin' and the 'human dignity'.

The divine origin means that this universe has a creator, God. The Creator is the origin and all creation branch out of the existence of His Divine entity. Accordingly, every truth associated to this universe must observe this fact and be interpreted accordingly.
This principle represents the main crucial point that if not viewed with a joint perspective would result in no possible agreement on any subsequent issue no matter how different that might tend to be. This is further discussed under 'Infallibility and Knowledge'.

The discussion here is about the axiom of 'man's dignity' in light of the origin of the universal perspective and its core point, that is, the 'divine origin'. In this context, we shall find that God Almighty commanded the angels to prostrate to Adam (as) as a 'representative of the human species'.[1]
However, does this denote that every human individual is better than angels?

[1] See Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol.1, p.137, on Angels' prostration to Adam (as) as a successor on earth. The prostration was to Adam (as) figuratively but to mankind as a whole. In Vol.13, p.164, further explanation of the verses in 'surah al-A'raf 07' suggests that the prostration was a submission to man's completion and that Adam (as) stood as a 'kiblah' for humanity opposite the angels. This is concluded in the outer meaning of the verses where the study is built on the rational aspect.

Are criminals of war, of politics and of history superior to Gabriel (as) or to any angel?
Certainly, this is beyond any logic! There are excessive writings on man's dignity that go beyond the norm to the extent where the presence of angels is either denied or considered as one creation forced to obedience, where such obedience becomes of no value.
The truth is that the dignity of man was neither established on this nor that. The distinctive quality of man is not merely within his 'free will', but in being 'a man with a free will'. The difference lies in the fact that the first notion denies any 'free will' for any other but man, including angels in particular. The second notion affirms the quality for mankind yet includes angels in the possession of free will. Man in possessing an instinctive nature makes his good choice a qualitative effort that could surpass the obedience of angels. This does not contradict with the fact earlier cited on prostration to humans. This is only based on free will and good choice and does not render that all humans would reach such a status of good choice, let alone being collectively regarded as better than angels!

The qualitative results are expected by yielding to good choice. Preference is not definite for every human individual but is subject to quality. Angels were ordered to prostrate to this creation that will achieve such results by mind and choice despite the strife of the soul.[1]

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[1] See verses, "*Certainly We have created man into distress*" [90:04], "*Thou, verily, O man, art working toward thy Lord a work which thou wilt meet (in His presence)*" [84:06], "*But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, Lo! the Garden will be his home.*" [79:40-41].

In his ‘Tafsir al-Mizan’, Allamah Tabatabi’ explains that:
“The deed being in fact subject to doing or abandoning and that man in being of an equal position is not by himself owner of his own preferred obedience, but is rather revealing his good soul and intent since there is no value for obedience when bad intent is carried, such as the obedience of a hypocrite whose good deeds fail and get erased. The pure soul and sincere worship is what keeps man away from disobedience in resorting to obedience. Enduring the difficulties is what makes an individual’s deeds pure and his obedience favoured. Therefore, where the nature of angels is based on purity and dignity and their work is judged by full obedience and sincere intention they rank better than man whose nature is soiled with passion, anger and lust and whose deeds hardly lack polytheism and ill temper. It is here that the angelic constituent is higher than the human constituent, for the former performs for sincere worship to God whereas the latter seeks completion for reward. Man in attaining gradual self-completion in a slow or a speedy progress might achieve in qualification what could entitle him to a higher rank.”[1]

Islam has strongly clarified that individuals who neglect reason are those who yield to ill choices and join the course of corruption in the earth. They could degrade thereby to a level lower than that of animals, such as referred to in the verses:
“*Already have We urged unto hell many of the jinn and humankind, having hearts wherewith they understand not, and having eyes wherewith they see not, and having ears*

[1] See full discussion in Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol.13/164.

wherewith they hear not. These are as the cattle - nay, but they are worse! These are the neglectful." [07:179]
"*Or deemest thou that most of them hear or understand? They are but as the cattle - nay, but they are farther astray?*" [25:44]

We conclude from the above:

1. that the principle of the dignity of man is evident.
2. that this dignity is subject to resorting to reason and to following the relevant course in practice.
3. that whoso renounces reason and follows passion degrades to lower than animal.

The 'Fiqh' of man's dignity

Man's dignity is not a principle to be firmly established, simply. An inclusive understanding must clarify the compliance with this principle in all ideological and applicable fields where such understanding should base on 'human dignity'.
In addition to the firmly-established principle and to the introduction of the understanding inclusive of laws and systems that could guarantee its application, evidences and proofs should also be provided to enable fulfilment of the principle of dignity at its widest possible scale. This is known as the 'Fiqh of Law' or 'Islamic conceptions'.

Infallibles have exerted tremendous efforts in this respect when all attempts by others have failed in rivalling the least along the centuries. This becomes evident when examining the religious rules that constitute the articles and clauses of the religious law and when examining the unique ideological and moral structure that covers all aspects of human nature

and its fluctuations in facing the variable circumstances of life.

Although humanity has experienced certain ideologies in thought and law outside the circle of infallibility or has been influenced by it in the least, there have been no similar experiences in the moral dimension. Nevertheless, such ideological and legal attempts were limited to sociological aspects while inattentive to the 'psychological structure', the larger in space and the source for every social conduct.

There are many examples to religion's wider and exclusive concern with the moral dimension. To name a few, it is the religious rules that assert the prohibition of 'backbiting' and cherish the dignity of the individuals in their absence. This prohibition also deters harm against individuals both in their presence and absence and scolds ill thinking. Religion tends to purify the self from any impurity that could inflict and damage the social ties that should cherish the human dignity of every individual.

It shall remain a marker in the history of humanity that the so-called advancement and development and the self-acclaimed exclusive right to civilization have been closely associated to the process that tends to turn man into an object -a product, that the deeper we look back in history the more we find the dignity of man much stronger and more evident, back to when God commanded the angels to prostrate to Adam (as).

However, this does not denote that the efforts made by the Infallibles have all gone in vain but rather illustrates how tremendous the confrontation has been with the tyrants and the pharaohs. Nevertheless, humanity has theoretically comprehended today the fruits of the efforts exerted by the

Infallibles in firmly establishing this principle. The day shall come when the theory turns into an actual practice.

It becomes quite evident when observing the social realism at the global level that the ever growing desire for liberty and dignity is much too big to be left confined within the hearts. There is an astronomical difference between the USA as a leader of human rights and its Veto right at the Security Council. This reveals the extent of 'profitability' in the raised discussions on the meanings of freedom, to which such debaters are far from any such connotation.
There are plenty of examples of such paradox that nations are very well aware of and where such awareness is bringing hope in a new promising future.

IV. Infallibility and Knowledge

Knowledge is based on an atmosphere, a thought and a substance of knowledge. The atmosphere in general is about freedom that defies tyranny, as earlier cited. The atmosphere in particular is about subsistence and all direct human rights that are obstructed once lacking the process of thought and the ability to address knowledge is hindered and restrained to the mere pursuit of finding sustenance.

Thought is but freedom and dialogue. We have discussed earlier the issue on freedom and the relevant position of infallibility. In this section, we shall discuss the following three issues:

- the particular atmosphere for knowledge;
- the issue on dialogue and the right of 'other opinions' to communicate their thoughts;
- and, the substance of knowledge presented by the Infallibles, where succeeding upgrades the individual to a level better than angels and failure degrades him to lower than animals.

1. Equal share in public resources

There is no discrimination between individuals in any divine religion (prior to distortion and inclusive only of applicable aspects). In the Holy Quran and the sound narratives of Hadith we find a general line that the Infallibles have endorsed along the centuries in terms of dealing with public assets and resources. This can be summarized in the following:

1. People are equal in bestowal. An executive authority when distributing funds should ensure distribution on equal basis, with no difference between a citizen and

a governor, a black man or a white man, a noble man and an ordinary man.

2. Endeavour is a reason for possession. Yet, there is a minimum of the earnings of each individual that becomes part of the public wealth required to cover for the needs of the community.
3. In addition to such minimum, the upbringing of the individual is based on realizing that the need of others are no less in significance to his own and that priority is given to altruism.
4. Rejection of lavish spending and luxury -being a demonstration of selfishness and carelessness towards the others.

For a further understanding of equal distribution of wealth the reader may refer to Imam Ali's (as) sermon at the public gathering on the day he received the pledge of allegiance after which the Imam (as) distributed an equal share of three dinars for every individual.[1]

Parity in public resources and altruism in private resources leave positive consequences that reflect on stability in the social and individual scale and constitute in turn for a suitable atmosphere that helps in building a stable and a distinguished rational process. In the infallible approach, sustenance and dignified life have been linked with expanding the scopes of reason and vice versa. A popular quote that refers to such linkage says: "should poverty travel to one land atheism would yell 'take me along'"[2].

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[1] Refer to sermon in al-Amaali by Sheikh al-Tousi, p.728.

[2] This is a famous quote by Imam Ali (as) of an unknown source. Abdulhalim Al-Jundi, in his book 'Imam Jaafar al-Sadeq (as) p.365, referred the narration to the honourable companion, Abu Dhar al-Ghafari.

2. Dialogue

There is such a distinctive characteristic in conveying the message of God Almighty by selecting the best man to enter into a serious conversation with all people alike and yet not forcing anyone into the embracing of religion without persuasion, as revealed in the verses: "*There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error.*" [02:256-257].

The Infallible in being concerned with conveying the message to all people means that people like Pharaoh, Karun, Namrud, Haman, Abu Lahab and others are all included in the debate. It is not to be misunderstood that dialogue was intended to address people other than such figures in the first place. The opposite is more direct to the point.

The Quranic verses clearly refer to discussions with such characters. For example:

1. "*Bethink thee of him who had an argument with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had given him the kingdom; how, when Abraham said: My Lord is He Who giveth life and causeth death, he answered: I give life and cause death. Abraham said: Lo! Allah causeth the sun to rise in the East, so do thou cause it to come up from the West. Thus was the disbeliever abashed. And Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk.*" [02:258]

The quote on many occasions was referred to the Prophet (pbuh & hf). Imam al-Sadeq (as) was quoted saying, "Poverty is the greatest death" and "Poverty is the red death". See, Al-Barqi, Al-Mahasen, Vol.1/218; al-Suddouq, al-Khissal, p.620. It was quoted in Bihar al-Anwar, Vol.69/42, by al-Majlessi in its first rendered phrasing and attributed to Imam Ali (as).

2. "*Go, both of you, unto Pharaoh. Lo! he hath transgressed (the bounds). And speak unto him a gentle word, that peradventure he may heed or fear.*" [20:43-44]

3. "*They said: Our Lord! Lo! we fear that he may be beforehand with us or that he may play the tyrant. He said: Fear not. Lo! I am with you twain, Hearing and Seeing. So go ye unto him and say: Lo! we are two messengers of thy Lord. So let the children of Israel go with us, and torment them not. We bring thee a token from thy Lord. And peace will be for him who followeth right guidance. Lo! it hath been revealed unto us that the doom will be for him who denieth and turneth away. (Pharaoh) said: Who then is the Lord of you twain, O Moses? He said: Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright. He said: What then is the state of the generations of old?*." [20:45-51] up to the verse, "*And We verily did show him all Our tokens, but he denied them and refused.*" [20:56].

In addressing Namrud or Pharoah ahead of all people -being those who practise tyranny and misleading, the commands aim to remind them first rather than to terrify them. Those addressed are involved in the discussion and should reminding fail then perhaps fear could deliver the 'message of the right' to everyone.

4. "*We sent Noah unto his people, and he said: O my people! Serve Allah. Ye have no other Allah save Him. Lo! I fear for you the retribution of an Awful Day. The chieftains of his people said: Lo! we see thee surely in plain error. He said: O my people! There is no error in me, but I am a messenger from the Lord of the Worlds. I convey unto you the messages*

of my Lord and give good counsel unto you, and know from Allah that which ye know not. Marvel ye that there should come unto you a Reminder from your Lord by means of a man among you, that he may warn you, and that ye may keep from evil, and that haply ye may find mercy." [07:59-63]

"*The chieftains of his folk, who disbelieved, said: We see thee but a mortal like us, and we see not that any follow thee save the most abject among us, without reflection. We behold in you no merit above us - nay, we deem you liars. He said: O my people! Bethink you, if I rely on a clear proof from my Lord and there hath come unto me a mercy from His presence, and it hath been made obscure to you, can we compel you to accept it when ye are averse thereto?*" [11:27-28]

One most significant aspect in the Holy Quran is that it is a book of prophets' conversations with tyrants for all people. God Almighty wishes to converse with His creation and present them with proofs that help them into arriving at the truth by their own choice. The dialogue does not denote the need for the other party in a discussion that would empty the dialogue of its content or turn it into a commodity of a utilitarian objective away from ideology.
The dialogue is based on "*..can we compel you to accept it when ye are averse thereto?*" [11:28]. The Creator has created the will of man free and immune. Such individual cannot respond but by his own choice, even if the entire world was in favour of a total opposite view, for a free will would not respond with mere compelling.
God Almighty can act upon His own wish, but such would make man lose his own merit. "*And if thy Lord willed, all*

who are in the earth would have believed together. Wouldst thou (Muhammad) compel men until they are believers?" [10:99].

The journey the Infallibles had to travel in the firm establishing of man's free will has been quite costly in terms of cruel accusation, harm, ridicule, underestimate and torture. However, the principle remained "*Are the messengers charged with aught save plain conveyance (of the message)?*" [16:35].
The Infallibles' experiences should be taken into serious consideration in sociological studies where they set the example in social reformation. One example was an experience that took ten centuries, such as documented in Noah's strife:

"*And verily we sent Noah (as Our messenger) unto his folk, and he continued with them for a thousand years save fifty years; and the flood engulfed them, for they were wrong-doers.*" [29:14]

"*We sent Noah unto his people, and he said: O my people! Serve Allah. Ye have no other Allah save Him. Lo! I fear for you the retribution of an Awful Day. The chieftains of his people said: Lo! we see thee surely in plain error. He said: O my people! There is no error in me, but I am a messenger from the Lord of the Worlds. I convey unto you the messages of my Lord and give good counsel unto you, and know from Allah that which ye know not. Marvel ye that there should come unto you a Reminder from your Lord by means of a man among you, that he may warn you, and that ye may keep from evil, and that haply ye may find mercy.*" [07:59-63]

"*The chieftains of his folk, who disbelieved, said: We see thee but a mortal like us, and we see not that any follow thee save the most abject among us, without reflection. We behold in you no merit above us - nay, we deem you liars.*" [11:27]

"*He is only a man in whom is a madness, so watch him for a while. He said: My Lord! Help me because they deny me.*" [23:25-26]

"*He said: My Lord! Lo! I have called unto my people night and day. But all my calling doth but add to their repugnance; And lo! whenever I call unto them that Thou mayst pardon them they thrust their fingers in their ears and cover themselves with their garments and persist (in their refusal) and magnify themselves in pride. And lo! I have called unto them aloud, And lo! I have made public proclamation unto them, and I have appealed to them in private.*" [71:05-09]

"*They said: O Noah! Thou hast disputed with us and multiplied disputation with us; now bring upon us that wherewith thou threatenest us, if thou art of the truthful.*" [11:32]

"*And he was building the ship, and every time that chieftains of his people passed him, they made mock of him. He said: Though ye make mock of Us, yet We mock at you even as ye mock;*" [11:38]

"*And if they deny thee, those before them also denied. Their messengers came unto them with clear proofs (of Allah's*

Sovereignty), and with the Psalms and the Text giving light." [35:25]

"*Even so there came no messenger unto those before them but they said: A wizard or a madman! Have they handed down (the saying) as an heirloom one unto another? Nay, but they are froward folk. So withdraw from them (O Muhammad), for thou art in no wise blameworthy, And warn, for warning profiteth believers.*" [51:52-55].

The difficulties that the prophets were met with in their arduous journey to converse and convey the message were not limited to moral abuse but expanded to include the worst kinds of physical abuse. Yet, the principle remained firm, as in the verse: "*Had Allah willed, they had not been idolatrous. We have not set thee as a keeper over them, nor art thou responsible for them.*" [06:107].

Nevertheless, the incredible efforts made by the Infallibles to convince people by proof and evidence do not imply that we should regard equally those who responded to pretext and logic and those who didn't by claiming the right to choose the opposite. Else, it would be similar to viewing an excellent graduate and a failing student as equal. It goes without saying that a good choice is received with praise whereas bad choice with dispraise. This note is worth mentioning as the current inclination favours to commend those who opted not to respond to the prophets on the basis of the right of free choice. They justify their reason to stand against religious facts and use it as a curtain for profanity resulting in a distorted concept of freedom, as earlier cited.

Dialogue as per the school of the Infallibles should be studied in the context of the divine dignity given to the perfect man who reaches such perfection by his own free will upon the basis of justice that requires a non predetermined choice. This necessitates that all humans possess free will. The infallibles' mission is limited to conveying the message with the mere presentation of evidence and without any manifestation of threatening, as revealed in the verse: "*Remind them, for thou art but an admonisher. Thou art not at all a warder over them.*" [88:21].

It is within this context that schools, scientific and academic institutions open their doors to those who thrive to succeed rather than to those who seek to fail. All potentials are made to serve everyone alike and represent absolute justice.

Ideology and blasphemy

In speaking about freedom of thought, do students who seek not to make effort and choose to fail rather than to pass have the right to utilise 'freedom' to turn a campus into a playground of frivolity, entertainment and impudence, resorting to means of suppression and disrespect of other opinions? Isn't such attitude and such action an act of chaos and an obstruction to collective freedom within a school and consequently a kind of treason to the objective of learning?

There is a major difference between the respect of thought and the respect of blasphemy. The first comes under "*There is no compulsion in religion..*" [02:256], whereas the second comes within the connotation desired by the negligent.[1]

[1] See, Sayed Tabatabai', Tafsir al-Mizan, , Vol.2, p.342 & Vol.4, p.117 on the interpretation of this verse.

Life is similar to a school where students may not be left without discipline in making a choice nor be left alone while making a bad choice. Bad practices are deterred and may reach an extent beyond expulsion. Such measures do not contradict with free will.
Schools define the basics, the objectives and the systems and provide selection for students by which they succeed or fail. Failure might be met with procedures that can reach expulsion because extreme failure can lead to crimes perpetrated under the cover of education.
In the school of life, religion has defined the basics, the objectives and the systems. The verses reveal that:
"*but verily there cometh unto you from Me a guidance; and whoso followeth My guidance, there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve.*" [02:38]

"*But he who turneth away from remembrance of Me, his will be a narrow life, and I shall bring him blind to the assembly on the Day of Resurrection. He will say: My Lord! Wherefor hast Thou gathered me (hither) blind, when I was wont to see? He will say: So (it must be). Our revelations came unto thee but thou didst forget them. In like manner thou art forgotten this Day.*" [20:124-126]. And, such is the failure and fiasco.

The divine guidance includes both the substance of knowledge and the system since knowledge is associated with action and is not for the mere purpose of learning. Further explanation is given under 'Infallibility and Knowledge'.

Freedom of thought and treason

It is necessary to stop at the position of ideology towards humanity in order to realise that truth represents the cornerstone in the rational and behavioural structure of man. It is quite clear in this respect that the construction of truth when built on an illusion is not but a construction built on a crumbling precipice that soon collapses. A foggy recognition of the truth cannot but yield a fluctuating structure and variable attitudes that soon change colour. An ideology built on truth is born within and serves back. Thought stands on solid ground and thereby presents a cornerstone in the insight of this who thinks and is a scale on which he judges views and ideas in a sense of psychological balance, reassurance and stability. With this we conclude that thought within its right orbit is man's most noble homeland because thought in the system of humanity forms the fruit of reason and the core of the heart.

The question in light of this understanding is: Do people in any country have the right to 'choose' to deal with the enemy who plans to occupy their territories and enslave their citizens, under the pretext of 'freedom of thought' and their 'free will' in choosing to deal with the enemy? Or, is their a limit to such 'freedom' that stops at a line where damage is inflicted on others? Shouldn't a passenger on board of a ship seeking to sink the vessel be stopped for his own advantage and for the advantage of the group?

It remains out of objectivity to define the attitude towards the freedom of thought without first rendering the answers to the following questions:

1. Doesn't 'sense' require us to defend our homeland and to provide every possible defence? Isn't this considered a restraint of the enemy's freedom of thought and an obstruction to the enemy's pursuit in fulfilling his own ideological option?
2. Why is it within the judgment of reason that citizens who betray their countries are punished with extreme verdicts?
3. Is capital treason that is prosecuted by capital punishment other than a sound reasonable judgment?
4. Is betrayal to sound reason and straight belief any less dangerous than betrayal to the country in its geographical sense that in turn has attained its national characteristics from within the circle of thought?
5. Isn't national betrayal but a capital treason that illustrates an ideological deformation?

There should be a clear understanding of the distinctive difference between 'thought' and 'capital treason'. The latter deserves capital punishment, as commonly known.
No matter how cherished the country was and how loyal its defenders were, thought is the noblest homeland for man. It is for the thought the defences should be deployed to deter the armies of ignorance, backwardness and blind urges. This is the mission to which the Infallibles were assigned. Humanity wouldn't have realised the 'value of knowledge' or the sacredness of thought and the difference between the former and ignorance dressed in a mask hadn't it been guided by those who sacrificed their lives for such value and

sacredness, following in the footsteps of the leading infallible prophets and guardians.

Illusion of dialogue

The calls for dialogue have become quite common. Interestingly, oppressive regimes now speak of the ‘other opinion’ and the need for representative councils, though more likely as ‘acting’ rather than an action.

This reveals that the infallibles’ efforts in the firm establishing of the principle of dialogue have crossed a wide distance and are still moving forward towards a promising future. Nevertheless, it is essential to realise the difference between a dialogue for the purpose of thought and a dialogue for the purpose of interest disguised in ideology. This is the illusion of dialogue that is far more grave than the absence of dialogue albeit the latter’s crucial importance.

A false dialogue becomes obvious when critical issues are avoided alleging that raising such issues could damage the dialogue. Yet, this stands as an absolute proof that the will to conduct a dialogue is undesirable.

One of the most significant examples in avoiding a dialogue is the discussion on deity, as earlier cited. The enormity of this question lies in the fact that many issues are being discussed without defining the position towards the principle. And whereas some researchers address the issue from absorption in the sensual, the mundane and the visible assuming the context of their research is Islamic and represent it as an ‘objective reality’, others do not have enough courage to take a negative stand towards those who do not believe in the presence of a creator nor a positive stand towards those who do believe and thereby seek not to raise

points of dispute and consequently keep the discussion within a common denominator.
It goes without saying that not defining the basics for the research makes the results infertile and almost similar to agreement on the unknown, or yet agreement on disagreement. We absorb ourselves in dialogue and stress on the titles to the extent that we not only push our search far from reaching a conclusive solution that could blow up all the efforts, such as the course of the ‘peace process in the Middle East’, but also we avoid wading in a final solution that should be the focus of our entire efforts. The result is that we end up unknowing what we have agreed on.

The discussion on freedom, justice, equality, law, development, society, environment, fortune and revolution is in all a discussion on the main issue, that is ‘man’. And thereby, every discussion that tends to remove itself from the essence of existence is not but a purposeless rap that goes too far in a confusing maze.
Everyone agrees that humanity is the utmost value and that man is the master of the world. We all agree that man’s freedom is consequently the foundation that cannot be touched and that the law is necessary to regulate such freedom. However, when we all agree to that we in fact accept our own individual understanding rather than the collective various understanding.
To further clarify this point, let us take a look at the answers to these questions:

1. What is meant by ‘man is the master of universe’?
   Some regard man as the master of creatures and God’s successor in the earth, whereas others regard the discussion on creatures a mere backwardness. A

third group simply views man as one focal point, with neither positive nor negative position towards the origin of existence.

2. What is meant by 'man's freedom is the origin'?
   Does this denote that there is no authority for one man over another? Or, there is no authority over man's authority? What is the position towards religion in general when religion gives no freedom to man versus God?
3. What law regulates man's freedom? Is it the positive law or the religious law?

It goes without saying that such a review can only result in a 'business' utilitarian outcome that serves a 'network of profits' and in a dialogue built on failure while disguising under the most fake type of social openness.
Unless the dialogue dares to discuss the basics and the essential points it won't render neither a serious nor a fruitful result. Dialogue as stressed in the Holy Quran focuses on the fundamental point from which all basics branch out. The course of the Infallibles has also stressed on dialogue as the core point by which priorities of dialogue can be easily defined. A testimony on this can be seen in a dialogue between al-Mufadhal and Ibn Abi al-Awjaa' -one of the most famous secularists back in the days of Imam Jaafar al-Sadeq (as). For the reported dialogue, see excerpt on Ibn Abi al-Awjaa.[1]

[1] Al-Majlessi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol.3, p.58. Brief: "Al-Mufadhal overheard a discussion between Ibn Abi al-Awajaa' and another secularist who were attacking the Prophet (pbuh & hf) and questioning the existence of God. He refuted their debate in a harsh discussion. Ibn Abi Al-Awajaa' protested to such trend of dialogue by commending the style of Imam

3. The Substance of Knowledge

The above discussion included several highlights on infallibility and knowledge in general with one indication to the truth of knowledge that the Infallibles have given absolute priority.[1] The question to be raised here is: What substance of knowledge did the Infallibles promote and give full concern? What was the reality of this knowledge that reason, the thought, the choice and freedom were made for and was the reason behind creation, divine messages and infallibles?

The answer is simply:

1. The knowledge of the self.
2. The fulfilment of such knowledge by application. Otherwise, knowledge is deemed short and more likely absent.

It is knowledge that reveals the essence of humanity in its most noble value. That revelation led into certainty that made angles realise the uniqueness of man succession in the earth. In realising the truth of mankind is the core point this realisation however has been ranging between excessiveness and remittance, from idolizing a number of humans to minimizing mankind down to a product or an object, as promoted by the culture of the twenty-first century.

Jaafar al-Sadeq (as) who always refuted the secularists with logic and short debate that left them speechless. Ibn Abi Al-Awjaa asked al-Mufadhal to use such style in dialogue."

[1] See in particular the discussion on 'the position of infallibility towards the creation process', 'infallibility and reason', 'infallibility and free will', 'ideology and blasphemy'.

It is sometimes conceived that enslaving the majority of people in favour of an influential minority, be that an individual or an oppressive regime, is not in contrast with man's sovereignty -although this minority is not inclined to serve human purposes. The opposite is true and the focus is totally far from being in service of humanity. This can only become clear when we understand how valuable man is within the Infallibles' method, beyond any materialistic value or any relevant purpose. An objective review can also find a decreasing value of man opposite an increasing value of technology. We certainly realise that the 17^{th} century experienced a qualitative leap in the 'experimental method' that later established for the industrial revolution. Nevertheless, this also resulted in a declining value of man in favour of machine. While industry should have won the machine in service of man, it acquired the former and lost the latter. Attention has been totally diverted from values and morals to laboratory and materialism. The culture of our present millennium, its earlier causes and subsequent effects, is built on such non genuine foundation. This point was referred to under 'the method' in the first chapter and is further discussed in the third and fourth chapters.

The discussion on the substance of knowledge is subject to the collective understanding of man's value. This is required so that we can tell which knowledge is suitable for such value of man within the system of existence.
Is man the focal point in universe after the Creator? This is what the teachings of the Infallibles affirm without doubt. Yet, this is also what the school of materialism claims in its best accordance with religion. It even goes beyond that to idolise man as the master of universe and nature,

incontestably. In a scientific comparison between the two schools, it is clearly noticed that the infallibles' school gives its concern to man's soul and body. It focuses in all its principal theories on man in the world of the visible and the invisible, in what is seen and unseen, in the physical sense and the metaphysics, whereas the school of materialism detaches the man by giving concern to his body at the expense of his spirit, soul, senses and emotions.

To make a comparison between the two schools by mere allegation will prove useless. A thorough observation of the ideological, behavioural, psychological and moral structure rendered by both materialism and religion is worthwhile. A closer look at the number of studies addressing man's valuable physical aspect will prove exceeding by far the number of studies conducted on man's psychological, moral, educational and sociological sides that are more valuable - though yielding a marginal level. Such is further demonstrated in the focus on physical pleasures or comfort, including food, clothing, furniture, communication, transport and education. However, education is most provided to earn a degree rather than to learn and is thereby a means for employment that can, in turn, afford for the pleasures. Football (soccer), for instance, receives a feverish attention beyond the ambition of any prestigious academy even if possessed the highest recognition in the materialistic world of labs and technology. This is not to underestimate the role of laboratories and technologies but rather to point to the minimized value of man as if he were only made of flesh.

The school of the infallibles is at the opposite of this understanding. It addresses man in both his spirit and flesh. However, it is the spirit that evolves the flesh into its highest glow and helps man in rising up to his rightful nature.

It is obvious that the spiritual needs are not served within the context of the alleged ‘scientific method’. The latter at its best situations should confess that it is merely a claimed experimental rational method and that its field does not go beyond the materialistic experience. This method should leave issues on spirit and metaphysics for the rational method concerned with this expansive aspect where matter is nothing but means and tools at its service. This is the mission of the Infallibles. Their journey is to render the solution for the dilemma that mankind is facing its peak at our present time. It is the dilemma of turning man into an object, where man’s sacredness is being violated and his soul is being nullified in favour of the very large machines, the very tiny and the electronic buttons.

It is quite astonishing that mankind’s journey was initiated with the angels’ prostration. Denunciation of this fact starts in the earth by gradual obliteration of the characteristics of humanity until reaching an agonizing end. These stages are accompanied with further renunciation of divinity. Aggression against humanity is in fact an aggression against the truth that mankind represents. And, it is here in particular where the search for the meaning of man’s succession should focus. According to the Infallible’s view, humanity is a unique divine jewel. Man is much larger than all materialistic dimensions reached by people. It is within the passions of man’s heart that heavens and earth are enveloped. All giant telescopes, satellites and space ships cannot reach the level of sensation or any single human feeling, let alone the huge role played by these devices at the expense of man’s dignity and all the employed materialistic achievements in deforming man’s soul and in disfiguring his nature.

This is similar to offering large sums of money and possessions to one person at the expense of his own dignity and sound integrity. To such an ignorant person and to shallow people alike this person would be moving from the humiliation of nomadism to the esteem of modernism. The fact is that such a person would not be departing his primitivism at all but instead would be transforming within the same state of ignorance from its disclosed state to its masked state where all features of first 'jahiliyah' (pre-Islamic pagan ignorance) 'technically' disguise. Should man become in possession of the universe with all its galaxies and globes and should he become an owner of the earthly life with all its mountains, oceans, prairies, skyscrapers and technology he is never to become any larger or mightier by such ownership. Man remains much larger than all this as long as he does not renounce the truth and as far as ignorance is not favoured to knowledge. Man can cherish the truth about himself once he is well aware of his 'self' and of the truth of existence. Man can then realise his true genetic and inherited psychological chart, whereas his physical genetic chart within the discoveries of today do not represent except the simplest figures, opposite to what is being promoted.

The mission of the Infallibles begin at the point that mankind cannot reach or creatively deal with unless the doors of the invisible world are open. This is to render that the Infallibles' mission involves a circle beyond the abilities of man should the latter rely heavily on his own potentials. This in turn does not contradict between the two circles in principle. The Infallible's mission does not interfere in man's possible abilities except when some people tend to exceed the limit

and suppress the features of the vast scopes of the soul, though only such scopes allow for the evaluation of man. Other than that, the Infallible's mission tend to encourage and boost the process of experimentation, exploration and invention within the moralities that respect the sacredness of man and his natural position in the beautiful existence.

In addition to urging and encouraging, infallibility secures the best psychological and ideological climate for creativity. Infallibility supplies this climate with complete visions and perspectives that if were fully observed would enhance the course of exploration and even make the quest shorter and faster.[1]

The concluded result is that the content of knowledge that the Infallibles have presented to people is simply the 'knowledge of the self'. It is said that 'this who knows himself knows his God'. The idea is that in realising the self we come to understand the truth of existence, our place in it, our rights and our duties.

This 'knowledge of the self' is rendered as: 'knowing God is attained through God'.[2] The following quotes by the Infallibles show the asserted significance of knowing oneself. Amir al-Momineen Imam Ali (as) says:

1. Utmost ignorance is man's ignorance of the affairs of himself.
2. Utmost wisdom is man's knowledge of himself.

[1] Further explanation to follow in Chapter Four.

[2] Sayed Tabatabai, Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol.6, p.172. He quoted the narrative by Imam al-Sadeq (as): "God is known through God Himself. This who knows God not through God does not know God but knows other…"

3. Utmost reason is man's awareness of himself. This who is aware is rational and this who is not has gone astray.
4. I wonder at a person looking for what is lost from him when he had lost himself yet not looking for it.
5. I wonder at a person who knows not himself how can he know his God.
6. The utmost knowledge is for a person to know himself.
7. How can a person who knows not himself know others?
8. Knowledge of the self is sufficient knowledge and ignorance of the self is sufficient ignorance.
9. This who knows himself knows others better and this who knows not himself lacks knowledge about others.
10. This who knows himself reaches utmost knowledge.
11. Know thy self. A person who knows not himself is ignorant in everything.[1]

These simple excerpts on the significance of oneself urge us to reconsider what we know about religion's concern of man. Man's lack of knowledge in oneself leads into a negative attitude towards his own interest. Religion is not an opponent but a source for guidance, passion and honouring that urge man to abandon bad habits that damage human nobleness.

[1] Ibid, quoted from "Ghurar al-Hikam".

V. Infallibility and the Unseen

Human completeness is subject to knowledge. Half the knowledge comes from 'unknowing', that is, acknowledgment of ignorance that necessitates the need for learning. The unknown is not limited to the materialistic aspect of existence, although what is known in this regard to what is unknown is in proportion a grain of sand in a desert. Such is shown by recent astronomical discoveries, where the world of matter in its metaphysical aspect is in proportion a particle in the vast cosmos and where the known is nothing compared to the unknown.

The unknown in its two materialistic and moral aspects is the "unseen" in its general connotation that includes the relative invisible, unknown to the person, whether or not knowledge of such unknown was possible and whether such knowledge could be attained either through human efforts or was subject to special divine aid through the master teachers of humanity[1]. Knowledges (sciences) need a teacher. A teacher needs to receive knowledge first. The more the capacity to receive knowledge the more concern the teacher can give and

[1] The Unseen is opposite to the Seen. The latter can be known, whereas the former is absent and invisible. Man could still learn some of the unknown. This is called the relative unseen, unknown to the others but witnessed by some. It could also be beyond the ability of man and made available only by a certain divine desire, such with those of unique preparation to receive what others cannot. This is the position of the Infallible as regards the unseen and relevant knowledge. The unseen could still be beyond any grasp and is thus called the absolute unseen. This is the divine knowledge that is not transmitted to creation. See further explanation in S. Tabatabai', al-Mizan, Vol.7/125-126; Vol.1/45; 118; Vol.2/131; Vol.7/127, 129, 251; Vol.11/307.

consequently the more ability to lead the learners. Many a scientist advances in knowledge yet find no other person to carry the findings. A scientist would then spread his knowledge to the scale that could be tolerated and embed within what next generations would possibly find and embrace.

There are levels of conventional and widespread sciences and knowledge available to everyone, either attained or can be learned. Advanced levels in speciality fields vary between attainable by a few and attainable by only the most genius of all. However, there are further advanced levels that go beyond the ability of the most remarkable genius people.
The knowledge that cannot be attained at all is the absolute unseen, followed by the relative unseen that strongly varies in its levels. The highest level in the relative unseen has been only made available to the last Prophet (Pbuh & hf), as revealed in the verses:
"*(He is) the Knower of the Unseen, and He revealeth unto none His secret, Save unto every messenger whom He hath chosen, and then He maketh a guard to go before him and a guard behind him, That He may know that they have indeed conveyed the messages of their Lord. He surroundeth all their doings, and He keepeth count of all things.*" [72:26-28]

The above presents one part of the controversy on the Infallibility and the Unseen, that is, the position of the Infallible opposite 'knowledge'. The relationship illustrates in its true meaning that it is inseparable from the practical embodiment of the objective behind the creation of man.

"*.. Thou warnest only those who fear their Lord in secret, and have established worship. He who growth (in goodness), groweth only for himself, (he cannot by his merit redeem others). Unto Allah is the journeying. The blind man is not equal with the seer; Nor is darkness (tantamount to) light; Nor is the shadow equal with the sun's full heat; Nor are the living equal with the dead. Lo! Allah maketh whom He will to hear. Thou canst not reach those who are in the graves. Thou art but a warner. Lo! We have sent thee with the Truth, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner; and there is not a nation but a warner hath passed among them. And if they deny thee, those before them also denied. Their messengers came unto them with clear proofs (of Allah's Sovereignty), and with the Psalms and the Scripture giving light.*" [35:18-25]

"*And verily We gave unto Moses the Scripture and We caused a train of messengers to follow after him, and We gave unto Jesus, son of Mary, clear proofs (of Allah's sovereignty), and We supported him with the Holy spirit. Is it ever so, that, when there cometh unto you a messenger (from Allah) with that which ye yourselves desire not, ye grow arrogant, and some ye disbelieve and some ye slay?*" [02:87]

"*Lo! We inspire thee as We inspired Noah and the prophets after him, as We inspired Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and as We imparted unto David the Psalms*" [04.163]

"*And messengers We have mentioned unto thee before and messengers We have not mentioned unto thee; and Allah spake directly unto Moses; Messengers of good cheer and of*

warning, in order that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the messengers. Allah was ever Mighty, Wise.” [04:164-165]

The earthly life is a divine school for man. All potentials in the globe, if not in all universe, were employed to qualify those who seek knowledge in all fields. Qualification includes both applied and scientific experiences, practical and theoretical. In this respect, theory is the introduction and science is the practice.

“*He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth..*” [002.029]

“*Hast thou not seen how Allah hath made all that is in the earth subservient unto you? And the ship runneth upon the sea by His command, and He holdeth back the heaven from falling on the earth unless by His leave. Lo! Allah is, for mankind, Full of Pity, Merciful.*” [65:22]

“*See ye not how Allah hath made serviceable unto you whatsoever is in the skies and whatsoever is in the earth and hath loaded you with His favours both without and within? Yet of mankind is he who disputeth concerning Allah, without knowledge or guidance or a scripture giving light.*” [31:20]

“*He said: Go down hence, both of you, one of you a foe unto the other. But when there come unto you from Me a guidance, then whoso followeth My guidance, he will not go astray nor come to grief.*” [20:123]

"*Allah (Himself) is Witness that there is no God save Him. And the angels and the men of learning (too are witness). Maintaining His creation in justice, there is no God save Him the Almighty, the Wise.*" [03:18]

"*.. (This is) a Scripture which We have revealed unto thee (Muhammad) that thereby thou mayst bring forth mankind from darkness unto light, by the permission of their Lord, unto the path of the Mighty, the Owner of Praise.*" [14:01]
Thereon, it becomes obvious that the first part of the Infallible's mission is related to its scientific extent:
"*.. None knoweth its explanation save Allah. And those who are of sound instruction say: We believe therein; the whole is from our Lord; but only men of understanding really heed.*" [03:07]

The other side of the mission relates to the Infallible's position in the administration of universe. It goes without saying that science qualifies for administration. The more the knowledge the better the qualification and the more justice the greater ability for the qualified to enact his administration within the frames of his task commissioned according to such qualities (i.e., knowledge and justice).
It is also necessary for the range of the commissioned task to be proportional with the deputizing party. The wider influence and the farther reach allow the same for the commissioned party. When we refer to the power of God Almighty, we should disallow our illusions from drawing a limit to the Infallible's mission. Else, such mission would be at its best in proportion with our mundane scopes that occasionally fail to define what authorities can be given from one human to another.

Objectivity requires that we listen to the commissioning party when speaking of the authorities of the delegates in carrying out the commissioned task. We should pay attention to the characteristics of the powers of the original commissioning party who commissioned the mission. For example, to grant an indulgence is falsely taken as negligence. However the case is otherwise.

"*Deem not that Allah is unaware of what the wicked do. He but giveth them a respite till a day when eyes will stare (in terror)*" [14:42]

"*Lo! nothing in the earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah.*" [03:05]

"*They indeed have disbelieved who say: Lo! Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary. Say: Who then can do aught against Allah, if He had willed to destroy the Messiah son of Mary, and his mother and everyone on earth? Allah's is the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them. He createth what He will. And Allah is Able to do all things.*" [05:17]

The affair is subject to respite and the might is effective without any boundaries:
"*Lo! Allah graspeth the heavens and the earth that they deviate not, and if they were to deviate there is not one that could grasp them after Him. Lo! He is ever Clement, Forgiving. And they swore by Allah, their most binding oath, that if a warner came unto them they would be more tractable than any of the nations; yet, when a warner came unto them it aroused in them naught save repugnance, (Shown in their)*

behaving arrogantly in the land and plotting evil; and the evil plot encloseth but the men who make it. Then, can they expect aught save the treatment of the folk of old? Thou wilt not find for Allah's way of treatment any substitute, nor wilt thou find for Allah's way of treatment aught of power to change. Have they not travelled in the land and seen the nature of the consequence for those who were before them, and they were mightier than these in power? Allah is not such that aught in the heavens or in the earth escapeth Him. Lo! He is the Wise, the Mighty. If Allah took mankind to task by that which they deserve, He would not leave a living creature on the surface of the earth; but He reprieveth them unto an appointed term, and when their term cometh - then verily (they will know that) Allah is ever Seer of His slaves." [35:41-45]

Accordingly, should their term come and the reprieving expire the truth of Might will prevail -the truth that reason was asked to realise and deal with in free will rather than in coercion:

"*And they esteem not Allah as He hath the right to be esteemed, when the whole earth is His handful on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens are rolled in His right hand. Glorified is He and High Exalted from all that they ascribe as partner (unto Him). And the trumpet is blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are in the earth swoon away, save him whom Allah willeth. Then it is blown a second time, and behold them standing waiting! And the earth shineth with the light of her Lord, and the Book is set up, and the prophets and the witnesses are brought, and it is judged between them with truth, and they are not wronged. And each soul is paid*

in full for what it did. And He is Best Aware of what they do.” [39:67-70]

Here, we should ponder at the difference between reprieving an unjust act and accountability. When it is time for accountability the divine power is enacted through the Infallible who then carries out the mission accordingly.

The Infallible is entrusted with issues summarized in the following:

1. Creation matters: This refers to the true meaning of man as master of nature and universe by the permission of God. In this respect, the reference for the Infallible are the angels, “*And those who govern the event*” [79:05]. Regulating the affairs is not to be assumed as ‘a mandate by God to angels commanded to prostrate to the Infallible who symbolizes his human kind’. Instead, the angels’ mission is associated to that of the Infallible, and therefore the Infallible’s reference to Angels.[1]

2. The system of divine guidance: It is the system that guarantees true guidance for every soul. This does not refer to the substance of knowledge that the Infallible

[1] Muslims agree that the Prophet (Pbuh & hf) holds such status and thereby the term ‘a pole in the circle of existence’ a postulate. Ibn Hijr in his ‘Sawa’eq Muh’riqah’ quoted what is considered an adoption of the concept on the necessary presence of one member of the family [Ahlulbayt (as)] in every time who is qualified to be followed, basing that on the narrative “stars are safety for sky creatures and members of my family are safety for inhabitants of earth..”, Sawa’eq Muh’riqah, Vol2/445, Aqaed & Milal Library software, first edition, Turath Centre for Computer, Amman, Jordan.

receives first but to the system of pursuit and evaluation, similar to the system applied in schools. To further clarify this point, although variable in fairness, it is similar to global trade and money circulation including all relevant institutions and complicated applications in terms of the individual's position in such a system and his share of food, clothing and all material needs. Here, let us ask ourselves: aren't the needs of the soul more complicated? How could anyone assume that the world of values and meaning does not submit to a system of precise control, justice and perfection that undertakes to deliver each individual's share in full? For a closer examining of the system of guidance let us ponder at the system that provides sustenance from air, water, plantation, livestock, etc.

"*And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof dependeth on Allah. He knoweth its habitation and its repository. All is in a clear Record.*" [11:06]

Guidance is a moral sustenance and the best demonstrated provision. It must be equipped with a system of precise features that surpass all materialistic systems. The difference between the system of guidance and the material system is similar to the difference between the verbal and the meaning, the core and the crust. This is the intended meaning of the system of divine guidance that correlates with the Infallible.

".. *Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright.*" [20:50]

3. To govern with justice: This is achieved by establishing an authority if possible, or without. The duty of people is to observe with obedience the deputised governor whose authorities are set according to his capacity within the limits of just powers.

The Infallible seeks to establish the just rule in ordinary ways although capable of establishing such by resorting to miracles and blessed faculty. This asserts the principle of free will and relevant trial. It also illustrates that a just rule is not forced on people but is a natural result of advanced knowledge and human completeness. This also demonstrates that religious rule and tyranny are two opposites that do not meet. When the Infallible or his deputy are entrusted with the ruling affair they guide people's interest in issues on authority and social affairs. The social affair is too crucial to be run by ignorant and utilitarian figures who minimize the ambitions and aspirations of people in favour of their own interests and fancies. The rule in being entrusted with the Infallible means that he is the most expert in divine rules, as revealed in the verse:

"*There hath come unto you a messenger, (one) of yourselves, unto whom aught that ye are overburdened is grievous, full of concern for you, for the believers full of pity, merciful.*" [09:128]

This, in turn, reveals how relevant is the theory on ruling within the method of the Infallible to human dignity and related impact on knowledge, freedom and law.

This also demonstrates that knowledge is the core in man's succession in the earth, the man with a free will. Knowledge is in turn the core in exercising the free will, taking into

consideration that such knowledge is science associated with application.

VI. A Human Like Yourselves

Many base the discussion on infallibility and the infallible on a methodology that classifies the Infallible in a class other than was divinely granted. This is sometimes declared but often otherwise. Such basis is the erroneous understanding of the human nature of the Prophet (Pbuh & hf) and the Infallibles in general. It is quite a critical basis upon which consequent concepts are built to minimize the unseen dimensions in the character of the Infallible. This evolves to further diminish the character and even to deny any metaphysical sense in the nature of some Infallibles, explicitly and without any concerns.[1]

Accordingly, this basis must be given utmost attention. In the context of divine commands given to the Prophet (Pbuh & hf), the verse says: "*Say: I am only a mortal like you. My Lord inspireth in me that your Allah is only One Allah. And whoever hopeth for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord.*" [18:110]

Here, we shall look at the meaning of 'a mortal like yourselves' that is applicable to prophets and infallibles. Those who yield to obscurity and suspicion find that the Infallible is human and all claimed special characteristics are but an inclination towards utopianism that is declined and nullified. For example, the narrative on the 14 Infallibles as

[1] Sayed al-Tabatabai' referred to this issue in Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol.6, p.369. He said that if such debaters were reminded of certain infallibility and spiritual situations of the Infallibles they would deem that as polytheism and refer to the verse "*Say: I am only a mortal like you*".

lights around the divine throne, the return of creation to them and the judgment upon them is without doubt found absurd by such group. They explain that the verse is clear about the human nature of the Infallible who has progressed to completion with his effort and blessings of God Almighty and has therefore reached the extent of infallibility. However, they find that speaking of metaphysical dimensions and approaching the Infallible's biography with a perspective that could be astonishing with disbelief in our modern times is a controversy in the waning religious approach that should be bypassed, or else, time would leave us behind.

The answer to such discussion is summarized in the following:

1. The verse in question refers to the human nature of the Prophet (Pbuh & hf). He is human in nature, away from any other relevant aspect. He eats and walks and shops, as asserted in another verse. The signs that differentiate the messenger from another human are subject to the divine desire, and so goes ".. *Say; Portents are with Allah..*" [06:109].

2. There is certainly no denial in the verse [18:110] to the metaphysical dimensions of a messenger because such metaphysical features are not within his human characteristics shared in common by all humans. It is an additional divine giving. A messenger is but a human who is incapable of bringing neither good nor bad to himself nor can make miracles within his human abilities. However, should the divine desire wish for any of such to occur through a messenger then it would take place in compliance with the divine

command to enable such human demonstrating such miracles. Further assertion of the metaphysical dimension comes in the following.

3. Imam al-Sadeq (as) in interpreting the meaning of "I am only a mortal like yourselves" said that it refers to being in creation a creature like them.[1] Sheikh al-Tousi said: God Almighty commanded his Prophet to tell the atheists "*I am only a mortal like yourself*" of flesh and blood, a son of Adam, but He entrusted me with prophethood and commanded me to convey His message and distinguished me by "*My Lord inspireth in me that your Allah is only One Allah*" [18:110].. and that my Lord who deserves to be worshipped is but only One God with the no other.[2]

   Al-Tabarsi said:

   a. Say O' Muhammad "I am only a mortal like you". Ibn Abbas said: "God Almighty taught His Prophet modesty so that he does not boast over others and to acknowledge that he is human like the others but was honoured with revelation by '*My Lord inspireth in me that your Allah is only One Allah*', that is I have no merit but in being honoured with religion and prophethood and I have no knowledge other than what God Has taught me".[3]
   b. The meaning is: Then He said to His prophet, Say O' Muhammad, tell the atheists "*I am*

[1] Ali bin Ibrahim al-Qummi, Tafsir al-Qummi, Vol.2, p.4.
[2] Sheikh al-Tousi, al-Tibyan, Vol.9, p.106.
[3] Sheikh al-Tabarsi, Tafsir Majmaa' al-Bayan, Vol.6, p.395.

> *only a mortal like you*" of flesh and blood, a son of Adam, but He entrusted me with prophethood and distinguished me by inspiring in me, and save for the inspiration I wouldn't have called upon you.

Al-Shoukani said:
This is a command for modesty, that I am only human and my affair is pertained to humankind and does not exceed to dominion. He does not claim knowledge of the words of God but is distinguished with divine inspiration. He said "My Lord inspireth in me" and that should be a sufficient description to distinguish between the Prophet (Pbuh & hf) and all other humans.[1]

Sayed al-Tabatabai' said:
The restriction of "I am only" is that he is human similar in nature to other humans and claims nothing of an alleged invisible power as falsely accused by opponents. This is why deniers asked him things he didn't know or couldn't do and therefore he denied any other power but what the divine inspiration has endowed him with.[2]

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[1] Al-Shoukani, Fat'h al-Qadeer, Vol.3, p.318.

[2] Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol.13, p.405. I have found no contradicting meaning to this. See also: al-Sayouti, al-Durr al-Manthur; al-Qurtubi, Vol.11, p69; Ibn Kuthair, Vol.3, p114; Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, Jamea' al-Bayan, Vol.16, p50, Vol.24, p116; al-Baqlani, I'jaaz al-Quran, p12; al-Toussi, al-Tebyan; al-Tabarsi, Majmaa' al-Bayan; al-Qummi, al-Ayyashi, al-Faydh al-Kashani in al-Safi & al-Asfa; al-Ragheb al-Asfahani, Mufradat Gharib al-Quran, p47, etc.

It is concluded that the Prophet (Pbuh & hf) was commanded to state his human nature when was asked to come with acts of divine nature. The verse is about denying any divine nature of the messenger.
Other verses prove the said meaning, as follows:
"*And they say: We will not put faith in thee till thou cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us; Or thou have a garden of date-palms and grapes, and cause rivers to gush forth therein abundantly; Or thou cause the heaven to fall upon us piecemeal, as thou hast pretended, or bring Allah and the angels as a warrant; Or thou have a house of gold; or thou ascend up into heaven, and even then we will put no faith in thine ascension till thou bring down for us a book that we can read. Say (O Muhammad): My Lord be Glorified! Am I aught save a mortal messenger?*" [17:90-93]

This is also the understanding referred to in the following verses:
"*Do the disbelievers reckon that they can choose My bondmen as protecting friends beside Me? Lo! We have prepared hell as a welcome for the disbelievers. Say: Shall We inform you who will be the greatest losers by their works? Those whose effort goeth astray in the life of the world, and yet they reckon that they do good work. Those are they who disbelieve in the revelations of their Lord and in the meeting with Him. Therefore their works are vain, and on the Day of Resurrection We assign no weight to them. That is their reward: hell, because they disbelieved, and made a jest of Our revelations and Our messengers.*

Lo! those who believe and do good works, theirs are the Gardens of Paradise for welcome, Wherein they will abide, with no desire to be removed from thence. Say: Though the sea became ink for the Words of my Lord, verily the sea would be used up before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even though We brought the like thereof to help. Say: I am only a mortal like you. My Lord inspireth in me that your Allah is only One Allah. And whoever hopeth for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord." [18:102-110]

4. What is the connotation of such expression in the Arabic language? Does it denote affirmation or restriction? While some master scholars[1] see that it denotes restriction, others see the denotation to give affirmation.[2] In our understanding, it denotes both restriction and affirmation.

5. The issue of discussion here is about manifestation of a two-part statement: "I am only a mortal like you" and "inspireth in me". The subject is about proving that the messenger is human like other humans but is different than others by being inspired. The confirmation applies to both the human nature and to the divine inspiration. Nevertheless, inspiration from

[1] Sheikh al-Tousi, al-Tibyan, Vol.2, p83; Tafsir al-Tabarsi, Majma' al-Bayan, Vol.1, p.475.
[2] Sayed Mustafa al-Khumaini, Tasir al-Quran al-Kareem, Vol.3, p398-401, in a sufficient linguistic study that shows that al-Sayyuti in his al-Itqaan was also in favour of this interpretation.

God is by itself the door to all metaphysical aspects. However, the extent of such dimension is associated to the degree of such revelation and its truthfulness and to whether the inspired received revelation did not contradict with the foundations and the basics. This is yet another search.

6. Ignorant people met all prophets with a dissonant wonderment, such as “immortal”, “immortal like ourselves”, “eateth food and walketh in the markets” and “the lowest follow thee’. Prophets always stressed that God sent human messengers because they were to address other human fellows. Should there be angels in the earth then angels would be sent down from heaven, such as in: “*And naught prevented mankind from believing when the guidance came unto them save that they said: Hath Allah sent a mortal as (His) messenger? Say: If there were in the earth angels walking secure, We had sent down for them from heaven an angel as messenger.*” [17:94-95]. The prophets had also affirmed that they were humans and yet messengers. Being human does not prevent possessing another quality that enables conveying the message of God. This is clearly revealed in the verses: “*Their messengers said: Can there be doubt concerning Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth? He calleth you that He may forgive you your sins and reprieve you unto an appointed term. They said: Ye are but mortals like us, who would fain turn us away from what our fathers used to worship. Then bring some clear warrant. Their messengers said unto them: We are but mortals like you, but Allah giveth*

grace unto whom He will of His worshippers. It is not ours to bring you a warrant unless by the permission of Allah. In Allah let believers put their trust!" [14:10-11].

The conclusion is that the human state of prophethood does not deny the privilege, which is a divine endowment. Inspiration from God is but a grace unto whom He will, who believe and worship Him.

7. The Holy Quran attested to the metaphysical aspect of the Infallibles following the assertion of their human nature. Let us review the following inspirations and compare with those inspired in the Prophet (Pbuh & hf). For example:

- Adam (as) was inspired with several revelations. Angels were commanded to prostrate to Adam (as) for the special qualities he was endowed with.
- Abraham (as) was inspired and shown many wondrous revelations, such as in: "..*Take four of the birds and cause them to incline unto thee..*" [02:260].
- Moses (as) received several inspirations and revelations. For example: ".. *Smite with thy staff the rock! And there gushed forth therefrom twelve springs..*" [07:160] ".. *Smite the sea with thy staff. And it parted, and each part was as a mountain vast..*" [26:63].
- Jesus (as) said: "*I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and I breathe into it and it is a bird, by Allah's leave. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah's leave. And I announce unto you what ye eat and what ye store up in your houses..*" [03:49].

- Muhammad (Pbuh & hf) said: "*..My Lord inspireth in me..*". The inspiration he received included several secrets that perhaps are not matched by any wondrous or metaphysical revelation that other messengers had experienced. It is in our understanding that for this truth all prophets and infallibles believed in the prophethood of Muhammad (Pbuh & hf) as the master of all prophets.

As introduced by God Almighty

In addition to the verse in discussion, let us refer to more clarifying verses:

1. "*Say (O Muhammad): My Lord be Glorified! Am I aught save a mortal messenger?*" [17:93]
2. "*Whatever of good befalleth thee (O man) it is from Allah, and whatever of ill befalleth thee it is from thyself. We have sent thee (Muhammad) as a messenger unto mankind and Allah is sufficient as Witness. Whoso obeyeth the messenger hath obeyed Allah, and whoso turneth away: We have not sent thee as a warder over them.*" [04:79-80]
3. "*Lo! those who swear allegiance unto thee (Muhammad), swear allegiance only unto Allah. The Hand of Allah is above their hands. So whosoever breaketh his oath, breaketh it only to his soul's hurt; while whosoever keepeth his covenant with Allah, on him will He bestow immense reward.*" [48:10]
4. "*Ye slew them not, but Allah slew them. And thou (Muhammad) threwest not when thou didst throw, but Allah threw, that He might test the believers by a fair test from Him. Lo! Allah is Hearer, Knower.*" [08:17]

5. "*Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire. It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired*" [53:03-04].

The above verses clearly state that the Prophet (Pbuh & hf) is a human messenger. Whoever loved God followed His messenger and whoever obeyed God obeyed His messenger. The hand is His, the word is His, the slew is His. The divine knowledge and power manifest in His messenger. Following and obeying the messenger is an obedience to God. It is quite amazing how we assert the utmost value of man, including the value of failing men, upon the applicable 'genuineness' of man in general. Yet, we minimize the value of the Infallible to less than a naïve ordinary man.

A religious approach to 'belief in the unseen' coming from the pure sense and yielding to objectivity does not reach integrity unless it believes in the metaphysical aspect of the Infallible as the source behind his divinely-inspired human character. Other than that is but an approach that Islam sees unfit for a believer. Being excessively impressed with the infallibles' character or strongly declining such quality drive the believer into a state of imbalance in approaching the Infallibles and the Prophet (Pbuh & Hf).

VII. The Self and The Mission

Is it possible to separate the self of the Infallible from the mission that he was commissioned with by God Almighty to convey to people?
Do the Infallible -the self- and the Infallible -the mission- make one single truth that cannot be separable? Or, is it that the self and the mission of the Infallible have dissolved that they can no longer be viewed as separable?
Has the Infallible, whose sincere belief and submission to the truth well known by God Almighty, reached a level that ordinary people cannot realise?
The true answer is the last. When we understand the scale of the Infallible's knowledge we can accept that whoever has pure knowledge in God may possess another quality unattainable but by the Infallibles.
Looking closely at the practical completeness of mind that dissolves in the theoretical intellect, we can realise the scale of truth that the infallible can reach. This is not approached by self absorption nor dissolution. The detail is in understanding the state of the Infallible.

Taking into consideration the scale of soul struggle to attained victory in such strife without necessarily being attributed to an infallible we find non infallible individuals attesting to such personal victory, saying "I have never intended a sin"; or even, "I have never thought of a sin".[1] Another slave in a slavery market whom reached a state of

[1] The two phrases were attributed to al-Sharif al-Murtadha ('Alam-ul Huda) and his brother al-Sharif al-Radhey who compiled the Peak of Eloquence (Nahj al-Balaghah).

human completeness was quoted saying: “What use are wishes to a slave?”

A believer is described as an ordinary man who employs all his abilities in joining between theory and practice. He, thereby, is capable of reaching a stage that qualifies him for the level referred to in the Sacred Hadith: “This who offends a believer in Me has declared himself a combatant against me.”[1]

The sacredness of the Infallible according to this hadith is relevant to the sacredness of God. In referring again to the Holy Quran, we find another assertion in the following verse: “*The Prophet is closer to the believers than their selves*” (The Prophet has a greater claim on the faithful than they have on themselves) [33:06].

This means that the Prophet (Pbuh & Hf) is beyond any defect and through him the divine administration of people and lands is exercised.

It is quite outrageous and damaging when we approach the Infallible, even if not intentionally, in a context that we do not even find applicably acceptable for a politician fighting for a cause or for a poet absorbed in the truth? Do we understand the connotation of “we do not weep for Hussain (as) but for the cause of Hussain (as)”?[2]

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[1] Sacred hadith narrated by Prophet (Pbuh & hf), reported by al-Hurr al-‘Aameli, al-Jawaher al-Saniyyah fil Ahadith al-Qudsiyyah, p120 and similarly by Imam al-Sadeq (as) in p332; alMajlessi, Bihar al-Anwar,Vol.64, p65, Vol.72, p155 & 158; Sheikh Hadi al-Najafi, Alf Hadith fil Momin, 1st ed., 1416 AH, p121, quoting al-Kafi book.

[2] Sayed Fadhlullah, Islam and the Logic of Power.

It is necessary to take two points into consideration when addressing the issue on the Infallible:
1. The cornerstone in believing in God is scaled by our position towards the Infallible. This is a unique and a transparent principle clearly defined in the following verse: "*Whoso obeyeth the messenger hath obeyed Allah.*." [04:80]. Therefore, minimizing the significance of the Infallible shakes the principle of monotheism that cannot be comprehended unless the utmost significance of the Infallible is realised first.
It is appalling to assume that the notion of monotheism is consolidated by asserting the mere human nature of the Infallible or when separating between the self and the mission. It becomes more grave when we attribute such assumption to the Quranic text, failing to note that by doing so we invalidate the difference between God Almighty and ourselves. By this, we allow ourselves to borrow God's firm principle on the non divine nature of the Infallible in order to approach the Infallible similarly.

2. It is such an agonizing estrangement and injustice towards the Infallible when we minimize his 'self' at the expense of his mission. We tend to magnify a leader or an official to the extent where his 'self' becomes the entire cause and we hail and praise his name, even if were an atheist, much more than we praise the name of the Prophet (Pbuh & hf).

In approaching the Infallible according to constant fundamentals and basics we realise that he is the only one who deserves to be met with appreciation and respect, generation after generation. It is a fundamental of significant consequence in addressing the Infallible and relevant issues

with respect, as we do in addressing regional, international and relevant issues. How dissonant it is to sense political veneration or submission and to bow to this authority or that, glorifying and absorbing ourselves with the ‘genuineness’ of man while we corner the Infallible into a false conception deemed the only approach in accord with monotheism, although God Almighty says:
“*Whoso obeyeth the messenger hath obeyed Allah..*” [04:80];
“*The Hand of Allah is above their hands*” [48:10];
“*Nor doth he speak of desire, It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired*” [53:3-4].
The discussion under “A Mortal like Yourselves” in the above presents further explanation.

VIII. A Methodological Approach to the Infallible

In studying the character of the Infallible we reach methodological facts necessary in concluding a logical conception about the distinguished and unique divinely-inspired human character. It goes without saying that approaching any fact away from its characteristics might lead us to the contrary while claiming to pursue proof and evidence. For example, how can we approach the truth about light without acknowledging its role in visibility? Wouldn't light and darkness be similar then?

A study on the Infallible from a non-Islamic view is based on a prejudgment that is already negative of the 'unseen' to the extent where the latter is conceived a myth.
Some Islamists tend to approach the matter from an erroneous understanding of the Infallible's human nature that they deny the metaphysical aspect in his character.
A non-Islamist views the issue from a certain understanding of modernism where civilisation advances in direct proportion with the cycle of time.
In such a view, every new thing in time is modern and every old is at its best a mere tradition. Some Islamists are impressed with modernism and perceive every original a chronicle -a definite result of masked materialism popular in some religious circles. Driven by their religiousness and faithfulness, they bestow religion with some modernism by lowering the 'weights' of our 'naïve earlier scholars' to make them suitable for our modern time.

A methodological definition in approaching the Infallible becomes necessary. It is to agree that:

1. The Infallible is a human being distinguished from all mankind by reason, knowledge and good choice in exercising of his free will, including morals. This should be identified before wading into the metaphysical aspect of his identity.

2. The 'unseen' is part of his characterised knowledge that stands as a crucial element. For example, a poet is not classified as per evaluation standards of physicians.

3. Infallibility and the assigned task add a divine aspect to the Infallible's true identity. That is, an assigned person receives certain authorities from the commissioning party. Such authorities become an essential genuine part of the Infallible's character that cannot be well perceived but on the basis of a metaphysical dimension. This however does not contradict with his human nature.

4. This leads us instantly to submit that an Infallible is larger than time and place. How can genius figures be met with great regard along history while an Infallible is viewed otherwise -although divinely chosen for his unique characteristics and receiving further divine support consequently?

5. The sense judges that the Infallible must be referred to on issues within his knowledge according to the same logic that requires an illiterate to refer to and accept the teachings of those of knowledge. This is also similar to seeking consultation from specialists. Quotes on the 'unseen' soundly attributed to the Infallible are not subject to judgment of reason that nullifies metaphysical

knowledge. Otherwise, this would renounce the sensible judgment in referring to those who know when we lack knowledge.

For a further example, the Infallibles reportedly said: "*Deeds are not accepted without prayers; hypocrisy is a great sin like drinking alcohol; oppression multiplies to vast darkness; Insulting a pious believer is a declaration of war against God; Backbiting a believer throws the doer in hell; Certain prayers have certain rewards, etc.*"

When such narratives are proven sound, they reveal metaphysical facts that may not be subject to examination and evaluation. This would be similar to consulting a scientist in atomic physics on discharging of energy, yet acting upon personal desire against the given consultation.

Chapter 3

The Text: A tradition or a revelation?

I. The Inerrant Text

The inerrant text refers to the Quranic scripture and to the text of the infallible. Certainly, when the speaker "*Nor doth he speak of desire, It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired*" [53:3-4], then his attributed text as well becomes inerrant. This also applies to the text of a speaker who is proven to possess qualities similar to those of the Messenger of God (Pbuh & Hf) save the precise and inclusive virtues and merits of the prophet.

There lies a significant difference between the approaches to religious texts out of this understanding and out of their being a mere 'tradition'.

Islam is not a tradition

The objective examining review corroborates that:

1. The digest of political sociology ever attained by human ideologies represents no innovation for Islam. Islam has offered its own characteristic approach to every ideological aspect that we fancy for novelty, though within the consumer-understanding of novelty. This has been verified within the approaches pursued by senior scholars on the religious text.
2. There is no contradiction between Islam and scientific facts.
3. The inerrant text stands as an abundant source for new discoveries[1].

In this trend, we find it possible to assert our rejection to the categorization of Islam as a 'tradition'. Such categorization is

[1] Further explanation to follow in Chapter Four.

but lacking objectivity and is failing to recognize the glaring truth that does not fade away along the span of time.

Could such a characterization apply to the spring of life that flows in the veins and arteries and in the existence? Or, does it apply to the air and water and to the sun and the moon? Are the rivers of knowledge and the seas of truth any less significant or of a value lower than any of the facts that glow in the light of the Muhammadian truth: Islam?

Any culture that allows individuals to stand in separation between its limited cycle, themselves and their times and between the modern and the old, the progressive and the regressive becomes but a guillotine by which all lacking facts are chopped.
To such an individual, those facts turn into a myth. Yet he himself would reiterate, ‘half the knowledge is unknown to me!’ And thereby, let everything that reaches your ears lie in the possibility, for once the probability arises the inference nullifies.

The description of an ideology as a ‘tradition’ lies worst in its connotation as identical to primitivism, immaturity and even of being legendary and mythical.
The prophets were messengers to humanity commissioned with unlocking the doors for mankind to reach the ‘unseen’ - which we are unable to realise its essence without a divine interference.

The future in this worldly existence is but one cycle of the entire future. The inerrant text is concerned with the unseen future as much as with the issue on fate and addresses it with

utmost attention being the cycle that controls the consequences despite its relative short time.

There is an rational 'elite' that tends to regard religion in the sense of a tradition, that is, to lock the interaction of our minds with religion save within a folkloric perspective. Most often, we tend to demonstrate religion in a manner that supports our attitude towards this falsehood. This in turn exposes a contradiction. The meaning of religion encompasses the most evident characteristics of truth, for truth is larger than time -the past, the present and the future, whereas the underlying meaning of 'tradition' is usually the submission to the circle of time.

Those who wish to enter into a technical linguistic discussion may please themselves. I would leave their objectivity to attest to their prevailing common usage of the word 'tradition' –where the constant connotation is derogatory, as earlier cited.

<u>The Characteristics</u>

In exploring the particulars of the inerrant text there arise the attributes and the constituents.
The attributes are defined in the following:

1. The distinction between the definite texts and all attained human knowledge is the difference between the truth and the attempts for reaching that truth or shunning away. It is the difference between the infallible and all people. The infallible "*Nor doth he speak of desire*" but rather conveys the words of God. And consequently, the difference between the inerrant

text and other texts is similar to the difference between God Almighty and His creation.

2. This in turn leads to a fact of a deep peculiarity of knowledge. The 'unseen' as much as mankind could learn about and the 'visible' with its entire apparition are both available in the scopes of knowledge for the human being. God has not veiled but what mankind could not conceive –due to the earthly-heavenly nature. Nevertheless, all knowledges implicitly exist in the Holy Quran and within the knowledge bestowed upon the infallibles.

   This asserts the implicit wealth of knowledge within the sacred and inerrant texts, a knowledge that never occurs to reason of man save for the infallibles.[1]

3. The inerrant text is one manifestation of human dignity upon which lies the requisite of turning the human magnificent powers from the state of capacity into the state of action. This signifies the integration of mankind in order to transform from a 'human-in-formation' into a true human.

4. The worldly existence with all its times and centuries is the entire interval required for mankind to reach an advanced stage in comprehending the accumulated knowledge implied within the text and to observe

[1] See interpretations of the Quranic verse "*an exposition of all things*"[16:89], in Basa'er al-Darajaat, Usool al-Kafi and al-Bi'har on the knowledge of the Infallible Prophet and the Imam. Also, see al-Mizan, the interpretation of the verse "*And He taught Adam all the names..* " [2:31].

such knowledge accordingly with compliance and practice.

The above stands in no contradiction with the ability of some people in each period of time to interact with facts ahead of their time. This discussion relates to the shift of interaction with the wealth of knowledge, that the inerrant text carries its message, into a stable public situation.

In this context there lies the progression of heavenly religions up to the final revealed, Islam. The progression shall proceed to reach the stage of "*that He may cause it to prevail over all religions*" [9:33]. This prevalence shall occur when the true globalisation is realised under the establishment of the global government of justice.

To clarify the concept on progression we find it necessary to recall the persistent ideological efforts, sufferance, agony and blood that humanity had to pay in order to recognize the value of freedom. Nevertheless, humanity suffers today from oppression and tyranny.
There is an urging need for a further theoretical explanation of the concept on freedom as well as for demanding efforts that can establish such a concept in the concrete fact.
Alternatively, we can perceive the concept by comparing between the principle of equality of the human race with all its ethnicities and the immense inconsistency in the practice. In behaviour and approach, we may not address the right and the wrong as alike.

Knowledge is neither similar to the perfection of knowledge nor to the immature knowledge. This in turn represents the

true beginning of the transformation of 'knowing' into 'knowledge'.[1]

The Foundations

The constituents of the inerrant text are all based on the monotheistic universal perspective of which such text is inspired. The constituents define our view of the God, the human and the universe.

A constituent comprises two elements: the human and the non-human, such as the ends and the means. In other words, the constituent is made up of the subject and the subjected. Out of this perspective, the constituents include the following:

From the 'unseen' to the 'unseen'

1. The accumulated knowledge in the inerrant text is based on the fact that the human being has come to the world from the 'unseen world' and shall return to it inevitably. The basic point in mankind wholeness in this regard is that humans return to the 'unseen' as complete humans who can lead the good life in all its dimensions and revelations.

Imam Khumaini says: "Islam establishes humans who are eager for justice, committed to its advancement, characterised by their noble manners and distinguished by their divine knowledge, so that when

[1] Recommended readings on the final stage of the Muhammadian Islam and the completion of knowledge at the appearance of the awaited Imam Al-Mahdi (aj) and the vast knowledge he shall spread among people. See Chapter Four, *Lost by his own people*.

> they depart this earthly life to another world they transcend in a true human form."[1]

The worldly existence thereby, 'the visible world', is situated in a central stage along the journey of mankind. This stage comes between two other stages in the 'unseen'. And along its course, the unification between learning and practice and knowledge and knowing takes place to achieve human integration. This is achieved through mankind's abilities and qualities building on man's early origination, 'creation and framed nature', and aligning with action in order to establish the man for the stage of his post-return to the 'unseen'.

This simply means that the inerrant text does not dissect the existence to scrutinise the section of the worldly life and theorise accordingly -such as perceived by all other texts. Else, this would be similar to analyzing a tree trunk apart from its roots and soil, the sun, the air, the water, the twigs, the shades and the fruit.

Larger than life

2. This shall lead us directly towards the fact that the respect for man is but an exclusive constituent of the inerrant text. To the latter, man is larger than life and greater than aging, dying, decaying and transforming into solid, as such perceived within the various materialistic notions that allege to praise the human being and humanity.

The inerrant text differs from all scopes of knowledge ever attained by human race in its distinctive principle that man

[1] See '*Al-Asfar Al-Arbaa*' by Sadrul Muta'allihyn al-Shirazi, V.9/157.

was created to live eternally. Mankind is only transferred from one world to another.

The measure of gain and loss

3. The above constitutes for an approach that deals with the presence of mankind in the worldly existence on the basis of an embryonic-phase of existence, that is, the intermediary cycle of this life.

Thereby and with utmost attention, man must be privileged with two aspects:

- The factual aspect consisting of all requisites of choice, knowledge and law by which justice is attained; and,
- The future aspect that begins after the birth of the spirit –also known as the stage of physical death, demise. This consists of all requisites of the good life and the everlasting bliss, the physical and the moral. And within this context comes the gain of "*And greater, Acceptance from Allah*" [9:72].

This denotes that the round of gain and loss, success and failure and the venture and the refrain are not measured by the cycle that man exists in. It is only a passage to the eternal abode and not a terminal on the track, let alone being the entire track of existence! Clearly, this essential principle is vividly present in all aspects of the life of mankind in the worldly existence, in knowledge and in practice.

The intent and the deed

4. The inerrant text draws upon a main rule on the interaction between the soul and the outward, or rather on the intent and the soul. The intent stands as a bridge for the soul towards the outward whether the

intent assumed its active form or remained within the realm of the soul –because even then at such state the intent would be present in its interaction with the outward, though indirectly.

a. The intent gains its higher status being the strategic action that man possesses, the man to whom God Ordered the Angels to prostrate.

The action is described as strategic because the intent is the fruit that grows from all nutrients that have contributed to the shaping and composing of the character of the person -who has accumulated all the knowledges and convictions. It becomes the person's doctrine and true religion in its own range, whereas the entire sum of intents forms a person's true doctrine and religion in general.

b. Indeed, should the seed of a plant grow and transform into a tree and perhaps live long then the seed of intent should by far be much significant, incomparably.

And, should the soil for the seed be made of solid dust and should its climate be made of the elements of nature, air, water and temperature, then the soil for the intent would be the soil in which the greatest world enfolds and the climate would be reason, the inclination, the insight and blindness, the light and darkness and the shade and heat.

"*He who groweth (in goodness) groweth only for himself and unto Allah is the journeying*."[35:18].
"*The blind man is not equal with the seer.*" [35:19].

"*Nor are darkness and light.*" [35:20].
"*Nor is the shadow equal with the sun's full heat.*" [35:21].

c. The intent stands as the spirit of the deed. There is no wonder that the deed within the perspective of the inerrant text has its own life, a flux of man's life in which man is responsible for his choices as God Has Desired for him.

The life and entity of the deed, with consideration to the intent from which the deed originates, grow to an extent where they reshape the soul. At this stage, the deed would either drive the soul's potentials towards serving the benefit of mankind and the soul owner, or would drive those potentials towards causing damage to the soul.
In the former, the benefit remains in the earth yet passes on to the 'unseen' world where the person shall find it present for him in his tomorrow. In the latter, the damage shall deform the soul and spread corruption in the earth.

d. This living being, the deed, has the characteristic of righteousness and wickedness. Once the deed is virtuous it becomes radiant and its doer would advance towards the purpose, the human completeness. On the other hand, should the deed be wicked it would encompass its doer, afflict him, obstruct his progress and terminate him. The case in both situations is determined by choice: the good choice and the bad choice.

e. When the body expires the deed remains alive, for the deed is an action of the spirit not of the body.

Certainly, the deed is the fruit of belief, which in turn is the soul of the spirit. The spirit is identified by its deeds and is assessed accordingly, either rewarded or punished.

"*Are ye rewarded aught save what ye did?*" [27:90];
"*And they find all that they did confronting them, and thy Lord wrongeth no-one.*" [18:49];
"*So that the evils of what they did smote them, and that which they used to mock surrounded them.*" [16:34];
"*Unto Him good words ascend, and the pious deed doth He exalt*" [35:10].[1]

It is the deed that ascends the doer to the highest of the high and descends him to the lowest of the low. It is the assessment hub and is also the judgment because it is the deed of the 'intent' that in turn is the will and determination of the man, for man is a fruit of the interaction between the soul and the intent, the intent and the deed, before, whilst and after the doing.

f. The inerrant text reflects the glorious status of humans by considering their deeds, and thereby intents, as one reason capable of making them larger than the time they live in. This comes in compliance with serving the detail of a wider universal plan that prepares mankind to lead an existence larger than the worldly life. By means of the good intent or its mind-produced deed, man

[1] In this context, it was narrated that Imam al-Sadeq (as) said: "These are but your deeds being brought back to you." See '*Al-Asfar*' by Sadrul Muta'allihyn, V.9/295.

> relates to the entire line of good intents across past and future centuries. He adds his credit to the credits of the others and thus his considered status an asset accredited to the entire processions of light and good.

This connection is not metaphoric but a real and moral association. This is indicated within making the doer a true associate in other people's intents and deeds. The narrated 'hadith' says: "Whoever likes the deeds of some people shall be joined with them and whoever likes the deeds of some people shall be associated in their deeds."[1]

"*Whoso obeyeth Allah and the messenger, they are with those unto whom Allah hath shown favour, of the prophets and the saints and the martyrs and the righteous. The best of company are they.*" [4:69].

The connection with future times through intent was emphasised in the words of Amir al-mu'minin Ali bin Abi Taleb (as).[2] [When Allah gave him victory over the enemy at the Battle of Jamal in Basrah one of his comrades said on that occasion, "I wish my brother so-and-so had been present and he too would have seen what success and victory Allah had given you", whereupon Amir al-mu'minin (as) said: "Did your brother hold me friend?" He said: "Yes". Then Amir al-mu'minin (as) said: "In that case he was with us. Rather in this army of ours even those persons were also present who are still in the loins of men and wombs of women. Shortly,

[1] See *Bihar al-Anwar*, V.65 p.131, by Allama al-Majlisi and *Lawa'ej al-Ashjan*, p.241, by S.Mohsen al-Ameen.
[2] See *Shar'h al-Nahj*, 1/247, by Ibn Abi al-Hadid.

time will bring them out and faith will get strength through them.”][1]

In accordance with the above, this dimension must be viewed as one main basis that constitutes the intent, upon which the inerrant text establishes its terms for the entire progression process, the developmental, the cultural, the educational, the moral, the political and the tactical in general. Addressing the accumulation of human experiences cannot be approached, at best, as a point to ponder but is rather a base for defining one’s attitude towards the events taking place in the world of today and towards all phases of events in the past and in the future.

This becomes evident in promoting the sense of social responsibility within the individual -who when required to take a position towards what the entire humanity has witnessed and shall witness- shall address the contemporary public affair at the advanced level where no dissuasions or distractions can obstruct or hinder him from interacting with true concern and confrontation.

Such a scale within the intent strongly emphasises the extent of responsibility that God Has placed in man. It also reveals clearly the status of man himself because the gravity of responsibility that bases on justice reveals in turn the grandness of its entrusted observer.

In our objective quest for an approach for upbringing to be observed in producing the individual’s sense of human responsibility we find no perfect system other than that of the

[1] Nahj al-Balaghah, “Peak of Eloquence”, English edition translated by Askari Jafri.

combination of "intent and deed" as introduced in the inerrant text.
Such a system starts with drawing the attention to the eventual fate, 'the return to God Almighty', keeping in mind that the future is but the same collection of choices made in the worldly existence and that who makes good choices shall enjoy a good future and vice versa, and that the intent is the basis and that man is larger than being confined in one corner on this Earth. Man is larger than the worldly existence and the latter was but set at his service.

There is a vast contrast between the 'semi-humans' who engage in the full pursuit of physical pleasures and the 'responsible humans' who tackle all events with responsibility, in their times and across all times.
The larger the goal grows, based on justice, the more possible the reaching of its stages.
At such point, it becomes possible to require man to be responsible towards all oppressions and tyrannies in this world and hence becomes understood the punishment of the people of Prophet Saleh (Shaloh) –who were inflicted for the [evil] deed of one man of their own. Instead of denying his act they accepted his deed and thus "*so Allah doomed them for their sin and razed (their dwellings)*" [91:14].

Man's unseen world is larger

5. The aforesaid conveys that the inerrant text comes within the fact that man's 'unseen' is larger than his 'seen' and that the world of the invisible is larger than the world of the visible and the ratio is the ratio. Texts had been clear that Man is the larger world and his heart is wider than Heaven and Earth. This clarifies

the vast difference between Man as perceived within the inerrant text and the common perception of man as a semi-human within the civilisation of the body and the machine.

The approach that splits the existence in order to study the earthly life in separation from its entire surroundings is but a school that splits man and addresses his tiny physical slice -a slice that does not build up but in its natural place; and, the farther it detaches, the tinier it becomes and vanishes.

The good life

6. In this earthly world there exist two kinds of life that grow into shape and reveal their true nature in the existing 'unseen' world of tomorrow that shall become visible. The two kinds associate to man and to his good or bad choices. They come, as earlier cited, from interaction processed inside the soul. In a way, the two lives can be described as the life of a 'free conscience' and the life of a 'tormented conscience', the innocent and the dubious, the observant and the inattentive, the life of the body within the niche of the soul opposite the life of the body at the expense of the soul, the life of compliance rather than disobedience and the attitude of 'Après moi le deluge'.

The inerrant text names the first life as the 'Good Life' and the second the 'Death', or say, the 'Life of the Dead'.

"*Is he who was dead and We have raised him unto life, and set for him a light wherein he walketh among men, as him*

whose similitude is in utter darkness whence he cannot emerge? Thus is their conduct made fairseeming for the disbelievers." [06:122].
"*Whosoever doeth right, whether male or female, and is a believer, him verily we shall quicken with good life, and We shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do*." [16:97].
"*Nor are the living equal with the dead. Lo! Allah maketh whom He will to hear. Thou canst not reach those who are in the graves.*" [35:22].
"*Only those can accept who hear. As for the dead, Allah will raise them up; then unto Him they will be returned.*" [06.36].

Death may come in stages. This who is dying could be in the first or the last stage or in between, where deafness and blindness occur, succeeded by closure of the heart and eventually the death of the brain and reason. The text has referred in abundance to each of the aforesaid stages.

The beauty of the inner self

7. It is within the constituents of the inerrant text that it stands as one school for the 'beauty of the immanent', showering the evident with splendours and brilliance of true beauty, opposite the 'beauty of the evident', which is usually based on delusion and disguise.

People of most beauty in the school of infallibility are those with wise minds in which their hearts follow suit and achieve justice within their entity. The most beautiful person could be "Juwaiber"[*], who was disagreeable in looks; whereas the

[*] Juwaiber, a black man and a trustworthy companion of the Prophet (pbuh & hf). He was delegated by the Prophet (pbuh & hf) to seek him

most hideous are those ill hearted, who opted for the bad and deprived themselves the wisdom of reason.
The most beautiful deeds come but from sound hearts that are pure, passionate and compassionate. The most hideous deeds come from hearts otherwise, even if such deeds were prayers and holy struggle (jihad), for it is a shell without a core and a mere shape lacking a content, for falsehood shall go in vain.
The most beautiful place is where falsehood and aggression manage to plunder not the least streak of the former's brilliance and glamour. And consequently, the most beautiful time is revealed: "*(The night is) Peace until the rising of the dawn.*" [97:05].

True images

8. The inerrant text stresses that each deed has a true image other than its visible or evident reflection. The true image shall appear in stages next to earthly life. Those who look in the light of right can still see the true image in the worldly existence. Man could choose for himself the image he pleases. Such an image is concluded as a fine exposure of man's will and choices -for man is the painter, his painting was painted by the brush of his deed, his ink and colours were his intent and his inkwell was his soul. Every expression within man's deed controls the streaks of the ever-active brush to form the final impression of the image. The latter is but man's true image in which he bids farewell to earthly life and with which he enters the world of the 'unseen'. The true image is but part of his good and ill choices.

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marriage with the daughter of one chief clan. See Al-Majlesi, Bihar Al-Anwar, Vol 22, P117-122.

Sadruddine Al-Shirazi said, "The Quranic scripture and the prophetic narrations (hadiths), yet the Book and the Sunnah, are abounding in reference to the embodiment of the souls into an image of associated ethics, habits, intentions and beliefs, explicitly and implicitly."[1]

Non-objective reality

9. In this respect, a genuine fundamental is applicable. It is the difference between the objective and the non-objective fact and is associated to the essence and dignity of man within the universal perception from which the inerrant text is revealed. This counts for the tiniest individual deed to the maximum collective act, between the right and the falsehood, but in the standards of the monotheistic universal perception that distinguishes between the true lasting existence and the mortal illusion of existence.

It is the difference between what is useful and what is useless. The former is of a true existence and is part of the lasting system of existence; the latter is within the context of vain –no matter how compelling or strong and effective it tends to seem. The former comes from the true man, the latter from the shape of a man.

[1] Sadruddine al-Shirazi (Sadrul Muta'alliheen), Al-Asfar Al-Arba'ah, Vol 9, P5 & 45, in which he referred to the Hadith: "People are resurrected in the image of their intents." Also, see Vol 9, P 157, 202-203, 227, "*Every faculty dominating the self of man takes a relevant image on the Day of Judgment, as mentioned in the Quranic verse, 'Say: Each one doth according to his rule of conduct, and thy Lord is Best Aware of him whose way is right.'*[17:84]." Also in p 309, 337 and 356. See, Imam Khumaini, Sahifah Nour, Vol 4, p 147-156, 17/10/1357 Solar Hijri=1978 AD.

> Should one political authority rule the world for centuries and base its rule on injustice and oppression then its entire realm is but an illusion in vain destined to vanish. Such a realm is similar to a horrendous crime echoing worldwide, yet in vain and is futile and shall perish in the true world of the 'unseen', whereas in this earthly existence it also stands similarly to an uprooted tree.

In this respect, the Quranic verses say:
"*He sendeth down water from the sky, so that valleys flow according to their measure, and the flood beareth (on its surface) swelling foam - from that which they smelt in the fire in order to make ornaments and tools riseth a foam like unto it - thus Allah coineth (the similitude of) the true and the false. Then, as for the foam, it passeth away as scum upon the banks, while, as for that which is of use to mankind, it remaineth in the earth. Thus Allah coineth the similitudes.*" [13:17].
"*As for those who disbelieve, their deeds are as a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one supposeth it to be water till he cometh unto it and findeth it naught, and findeth, in the place thereof, Allah Who payeth him his due; and Allah is swift at reckoning.*" [24:39]
"Lo! as for these, their way will be destroyed and all that they are doing is in vain." [07:139]
"*Whoso desireth the life of the world and its pomp, We shall repay them their deeds herein, and therein they will not be wronged.*" [11:15]
"*Those are they for whom is naught in the Hereafter save the Fire. (All) that they contrive here is vain and (all) that they are wont to do is fruitless.*" [11:16]

Accordingly, man with the will of God casts his innate disposition on the earthly existence. The latter orbits around the real existence that in turn is associated to the nature of the deed. The deed is subject to the intent that in turn is the fruit of belief. Belief is either built on truth or falsehood. Falsehood is built on a crumbling precipice destined to collapse, whereas truth is the real existence associated to God, the Originator of existence and its utmost.

"*And say: Truth hath come and falsehood hath vanished away. Lo! falsehood is ever bound to vanish.*" [17:81].
"Nay, but We hurl the true against the false, and it doth break its head and lo! it vanisheth. And yours will be woe for that which ye ascribe (unto Him)" [21:18].

The aforesaid clearly means that the earthly existence does not take control of man but is rather led by him should his choices be favourable. Man can either turn the world into a prostration place for the patrons of God or live by its manifest and hence by its matter of illusion. Yet, man can furnish the worldly existence, by the will of God, either with an eternal bliss or an everlasting misery, that is, an eternal paradise of survival, eternity and everlasting bliss regardless of its place; or, hell and abyss of perish, vanish and scattered motes. The immanent of the worldly existence is in the deed of man and becomes the evident of his Hereafter. The evident of the worldly existence is of no value because the centre is the man who is judged by his immanent deed rather than evident. This who is deceived and beguiled by the earthly life sees its evident as immanent, whereas observing its immanent with insight and consideration turns its immanent into evident in the Hereafter.

"Know that the life of the world is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children; as the likeness of vegetation after rain, whereof the growth is pleasing to the husbandman, but afterward it drieth up and thou seest it turning yellow, then it becometh straw. And in the Hereafter there is grievous punishment, and (also) forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure, whereas the life of the world is but matter of illusion." [57:20][1]

The truth without screens

10. Another applicable constituent is that the inerrant text carefully addresses with utmost concern the fact that man can deal with the truth with ease, without obstructions nor flaws, whenever possible.

Therefore, the inerrant text declares a non-lenient war against such issues that could mislead man into a state of vision disorder, where the mortal seems immortal, and vice versa. The inerrant text is based on the conservation of man's environment, consisting of reason, human senses and emotions. It rejects disguise and swindling -both the visible and the invisible.

For instance, the inerrant text also rejects luxury as one polluting element. It delusively tends to make materialistic pleasures appear as lasting and allures the soul towards

[1] See interpretation of verse, Sheikh Al-Tousi, Al-Tebyan, Vol 9, p 530; Tabatabai, Tafsir Al-Mizan, Vol 19, p 164; Ibn Jarir Al-Tabari, Jame'a Al-Bayan, Vol 27, p 301; Al-Qurtubi, Tafsir, Vol 17, p 256; S.Mustafa Al-Khumaini, Tafsir, Vol 3, p 48-49; Sheik Al-Mufid, Al-Amali, p 86; etc.

favouring the worldly existence, contradicting with its being a mere temporary abode -yet approaching it as if it were the final abode.

The inerrant text calls for contentment that contributes to the pure environment of the soul with no streaks of disguise. Asceticism is viewed as an advanced degree on the scale of contentment. Contentment reveals the true awareness of magnitudes: of earthly life, the Hereafter, the fortune, the reward, the desire, etc. It provides an access to realism away from any screens that block the heart and the insight that prevent a clear vision of facts.

The inerrant text regards the promotion of corruption in the earth the gravest pollution of utmost disguise and swindle. Risks of corruption include in part the blocking of reason and the release of instincts that take control over reason should they be set loose. In this context, we should comprehend the dimensions of prohibition, as such of bedizenment, indecent dressing, profligacy, debauchery, impudence and intoxicant drinks –where all form a massive aggression against reason and are but an origin for every corruption.[1]

Worlds of light and darkness

11. The inerrant text refers to the worlds of light and darkness as an existence of a true entity[2]. It does not

[1] The aforesaid is an example and does not refer to Fiqh rules.

[2] Tabatabai, Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol. 1, p. 179; Mulla Hadi al-Sebzuari, Sharh-ul Asmaa al-Husna, Vol. 1, p 60-76, Vol. 2, p 110; Imam Khumaini, 40 Hadiths, trans. by Sayed al-Gharawi, hadith 26, p 453-456; Moral ethics of Salat, end of Ch. 1, p 119, beginning of Ch. 5, p349, also in p. 403.

> refer to these worlds metaphorically nor intends to imply a meaning in the sense of a clear conscience or full compliance with the rules, nor of a figurative sense of light.

Each dead has its own share of light or darkness as per the bright or dark intent from which the dead has originated. The intent derives its components from its harmony either with the right or the falsehood. The right is a true light because it exists, whereas the falsehood is dark because it is nihility. For every good deed there is light drawn from a true intent and for every bad deed there is darkness drawn from an invalid intent.

The consequence is that every man will have his own share of light or of darkness. Man has influence on his surroundings and thereby the place attains light or darkness from its own inhabitant for the period of his stay -as much as the time of each person attains its own peculiarity thereof.

There is no harm inflicted on sunlight should it not be seen by those deprived of such. Several scholars and other people of knowledge have reported visions of such light under various revelations. Sheikh al-Bahai'[1] quotes that ".. those attaining knowledge of spiritual observations are regarded higher than those of physical observations. In the same way we accept the knowledge the latter bring, we should rather believe those who reveal the hidden aspects of the spiritual worlds."

Though the light we recognise can be seen with the eye, the original light is but seen with insight and with an enlightened

[1] 40 Hadiths, p. 273, 1992 edition, Dar al-Rasool al-Akram, Dar al-Mahajjah al-Baydhaa, Beirut.

heart that escaped the rust and was neither blocked by screens of light, darkness or both, nor was locked within.

"These hearts do corrode like the iron rust. They were pointed to clearly in the Quran."[1]
"Nay, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts." [83:14].
"Will they then not meditate on the Qur'an, or are there locks on the hearts?" [47:24].

Texts based on the comprehension of this truth are plenty. These refer to the worlds of pre-creation, creation, this origination and post-origination, the world of the interval barrier and the world of resurrection. There arises a grave confusion in addressing all these aspects merely within a figurative context. Although light and darkness are sometimes used metaphorically around the text, however, this is an exception not a rule.[2]

Repentance

12. The inerrant text gives deep concern to the righteousness of man, no matter how far the latter has deformed his human nature and has become overwhelmed by the darkness of ignorance and falsehood.

[1] Notable hadith, al-Ray Shahri, Mohammad Muhammadi, Mizan al-Hikmah, Vol. 8, p. 247. Abundantly quoted in Shiite and Sunni references.
[2] See interpretation of *"Allah is the Protecting Guardian of those who believe. He bringeth them out of darkness into light."* [02:257], Tabatabai, Tasfir al-Mizan, Vol. 2, p. 345.

A good human life remains available for man. God will continue to supply man with light to lead a good life amongst people. This in turn relies on the deed of man as the fruit of his intent, which in turn is the knowledge he has attained and the will he shall exert. This is to indicate that the inerrant text clearly bears no other purpose but the good interest of man and thereby the purpose of man.
The inerrant text in asserting the compliance of man with his human requisites is but confirming that such compliance is within the obedience of God without any other implicit purpose. The benefit of such obedience is only reflected on man himself and leads him into the true reality. Only then can man reap the fruits of his human nature.

The more concern given to those who abuse, renounce and become insolent can only prove the origin of such concern: love and good interest.
For instance, a parent is keen to raise up his child in the best way, no matter how bad the child behaved. The parent will continue to invest in his child’s upbringing, offering forgiveness and welcoming any good new beginning.
An opponent unable to defeat the other is keen to look for a new relationship that will serve his interest.
When interest and benefit cease to exist, yet one party remains keen to establish a qualitative relationship whilst the other remains rejecting, the only interpretation is that the former is acting out of love, passion and compassion.

Repentance as described in the inerrant text reveals the great status in which God positions the man. Should man spend a lifetime astray then tends to establish a different bonding with himself and with people in the divine line that observes the

rights, dignity and freedom of people and within compliance with the rules set amongst men, it is then God the more joyous with such a return rather than the returnee himself.[1]

Moreover, some degrees of accepted repentance are astonishing. They expose all patterns of 'legal' actions taken against people previously convicted by the law. God's accepted repentance shows how legal actions are inferior in their addressing of man who represents the peak of this life.

A true repentance can reach a status where God replaces all evil deeds with good deeds. A true repentance, as briefly cited, means a determined will and an asserted intent to cut all ties with the ill past and revolutionise the inside to demolish the entire entity that was built on the brink of a crumbling precipice and establish a new structure based on the rule of justice, that is, devoutness.

".. as for such, Allah will change their evil deeds to good deeds.." [25:70]

It is also known that lower levels do exist, for true repentance is bound to intent not to manner or form. Nevertheless, there is another side to this fact. A radical alteration in a positive attitude could occur and turn into the negative. Those who follow in the path of reason and integrity could depart it completely and divert into a twisted path of thought and conduct. Both alterations should bear indications and have early signs in particular. They should have restraints to maintain the individual and the society. The journey of man on Earth must be guarded. Any defect or disorder will certainly inflict damage.

In this respect, two limits may not be exceeded: preservation of the society may not exceed the rehabilitation of the individual, nor otherwise.

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[1] See al-Bahai', 40 Hadiths, Hadith 38, Repentance.

This punctual balance is referred to by the inerrant text as an act of God.
"Should He not know what He created? And He is the Subtle, the Aware." [67:14]

It is very clearly observed that the equation the inerrant line draws in this context is based on a rule of a deep leniency in the straightening of the individual yet with a strange strictness in its judgment of an unfortunate consequence[1], as long as the damage is confined within the individual. Else, should the damage inflict others, leniency would turn into strictness and strictness into leniency, for it is then a matter between a preservation of the individual and a preservation of the group.
This fact on keeping balance between the straightening of the individual and the preservation of the society represents the need of mankind for divine rules. The difference between the divine rules and the positive laws is similar to that between the instructions in a manual and the mere guessing of the user.

Freedom of the individual and the group

13. The aforesaid does not contradict with the fact that the inerrant text refers to the cited issues on the basis that man is a creature. Man's dignity as an individual and his high status do not allow him to violate the law or infringe the freedom and security of the society. This neither restricts his freedom nor puts any constraints, for freedom is guaranteed for the society and by the

[1] See al-Bahai', 40 Hadiths, Hadith 38, "[..] one day is too long; this who repents before seeing will receive acceptance by God." Seeing relates to the worlds of the unseen that reveal before the dying person.

> law. Any violation of freedom is an aggression on society and law. It stands as a violation of the rights of others -and the more the violation the more the aggression.

The greatness of man as a creature does not entitle him to act freely as he pleases. Humanity is about reason and justice. These require man to submit to the law. The law guarantees freedom and the good interest of man within the system of public interest and freedom of all men. Man's private life is also subject to the service of the life of his community. Should a man lose his life for the survival of his community, he shall then live with his Lord, whereas fleeing the duty turns him into a living dead.

Man in being a social and a civil creature is required to abide by his very two qualities: being social and a creature. Renouncing his nature is a renunciation of the right and justice that cannot be overlooked. Justice is but one essential requisite of monotheism. How could a monotheist creature renounce justice? Such is but a compound of frivolity and ignorance. A person renouncing his parent falls down on the scale of humanity. A person who obliterates justice, which is the most indicative of reason and is most revealed in abiding by the right, is but renouncing his Creator.

If this who renounces his homeland commits treason, then how can be described he who renounces his beginning and end, his genuine truth and the message that was carried by the infallibles for the best interest of man with no least benefit for the Creator!

Patronage and sponsorship of scientific advancement

14. It is within the constituents of the inerrant text to give consideration to all facts of knowledge with which humanity shall deal along the transcending journey, from the unknown to the known, in all fields of knowledge with no exception.

The inerrant text refers implicitly or indicatively to all fields of scientific advancement that man shall reach, including medicine, anatomy, laboratory, physical health, nature and space invasion. The inerrant text relays the words of God, the ever Knower of all things, to His creation, so that the latter can reach the utmost scales of knowledge. It is a fact that is obvious and is similar to the teachings of the scholars to those who lack knowledge and to the way the old address the young. The text conveys the clues for knowledge while preserving the basics and the invariables. It is with knowledge that the implicit indications, the codes and the keys can be decoded.

The inerrant text focuses with concern on the philosophy of existence and human sciences, the knowledge of the self in its both individual and socials arenas. However, it does not ignore at all the other sciences that contribute to the motion of the individual human and the society on Earth and elsewhere, in the heart of the sky or in the depth of the undersea.

In observing that the qualitative transition in fields of knowledge may take place, for instance, when concluding an equation, it becomes more imaginable and credible that the accumulated knowledge within the inerrant text does bear such equations or leading details or, if not at least, embedded indications.

Although scholars well experienced with the inerrant text and those highly educated amongst them in particular adopt an attitude that sees no objection to the enclosure of details within the inerrant text -in the sense of the door that opens a thousand doors[1], the issue on indications remains closer to our understanding and can be reached much easier. Further elaboration appears in this Chapter.

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The above has been an attempt to address the characteristics of the inerrant text through exploring its constituents. The constituents do not neglect the public affair, as they might tend to seem at times, because the social texture the inerrant text presents is of such uniqueness where an individual can appear with all his features. Consequently, the inerrant text presents the society as made up of real individuals, disallowing any effacing of neither their features nor their rights.

This divine outlining of the social portrait draws a wonderful balance between the right of the individual and the right of the group. Shunning away from the divine guidance has only led mankind into the dilemma of mal-distribution of fortune, such as in mass production and poor distribution. Under the capital economy, the individual suffers from satiety till death. Under the socialist economy, the society suffers from starvation till death. Under tyrant regimes one individual captures the entire picture. In other cases, some lead the nation into the confiscation of rights at the expense of the law. Those who preach on liberty might turn into tyrants, and so on.

[1] See, S. Tabatabai, Tafsir al-Mizan, interpretation of *"... an exposition of all things..."* [16:89].

It is this whirlpool that has turned man’s life in this worldly existence with all its vastness into a mere misery, in which man forgets himself and dashes out to feed his physical needs, should he manage, and yet a few do.

II. The Evident

Addressing the inerrant text has been, and still is, experiencing the puzzling balance between the evident (visible) and the immanent (invisible) and in furnishing each with its natural truth asserted by reason and proven by evidence. Generally, the conceived natural truth is the positive and the possibility, that is, the positive indication of the letter to the meaning; or, the possible meaning including assumption –where the conclusion is subject to proof and evidence. Else, it is to be positive that such a meaning is either definite or possible based on evidence. Apparently, evidence could be powerful enough to turn a conclusion upside down.

In this respect, both the letter and the meaning become equal and so do the evident and the immanent. Just as the evidence could be in favour of both the letter and the evident[1] and thus providing the required sole possible meaning, it could be in favour of the distant meaning that first crosses reason due to several factors yet is excluded by evidence despite its preceding impression. It could also be in favour of a distant meaning that does not cross reason in the first place but that was conceived with contemplation. Such can reveal the encompassing stretch of the letter and thereto excluding the first impression and including the last conceived. The closest can be the farthest and vice versa.

[1] This refers to the apparent meaning of the letter and the implicit content of the meaning. It is drawn on a tolerant approach in balancing between the letter and the meaning.

An example to similarity is given in the word 'water'. In letter and spirit, water is known at most instances, at least.
An example on the difference between the letter and the meaning appears in the verse *"And there came a caravan"* [12:19]. The word caravan in Arabic was rendered as "sayyarah". The modern Arabic connotation of 'sayyarah, automobile' was unfamiliar in the old times and the modern usage of the word is inapplicable to the intended meaning.
A third example is in the verse: *"Hast thou not seen how Allah wafteth the clouds, then gathereth them, then maketh them layers, and thou seest the rain come forth from between them; He sendeth down from the heaven mountains wherein is hail, and smiteth therewith whom He will, and averteth it from whom He will. The flashing of His lightning all but snatcheth away the sight."* [24:42]
The above verse was addressed in the past according to the knowledge attained at the time. At present, it is required to include the detailed explanation when referring to cumulus clouds, where positive and negative electric charges make contact and generate thunder and lightning that snatches away the sight.[1]

It is to be noted that the inclusion of a recent understanding into the quest of connotation is totally different from the use of modern science in the interpretation of the Quran. The latter is a trend that is absolutely rejected.
In the second example mentioned above, it is to note that the excluded meaning is the modern meaning. In the third example, the excluded is the old meaning and the included potential is the modern.

[1] See, Muhammad Ismail Ibrahim, The Quran and its wondrous sciences, p. 174, Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi.

There is a joint aspect in all examples. The denotation of the letter is the centre of the issue. Potential or excluded meanings are subject to the apparent or evident indication of the letter. This reveals that the apparent takes control over the connoted or implicit. This, in turn, requires an exclusion of an associated meaning to the letter that cannot be contained.
However, the letter has enough capacity of containment where its nature rejects improvisation in judging otherwise, particularly when the addressed issue is the inerrant text that conveys the message of God to mankind along all ages that shall witness new findings beyond the perceived limit.
Nonetheless, the authority, the judging rule and the final word is to the apparent or the evident, that is, the letter. This stands as the principle and must be asserted. Every approach to the text must base on this principle should the approach intend to be conclusive and consistent with the sound mind and righteous appreciation.

Imam Khumaini says: "This who pursues the path of immanent (invisible) not examining the evident (apparent) has but gone astray and has misled off the right path. This who goes by the apparent and holds to it in pursuit of reaching the facts [...] is but guided to the right path and has recited the Book at its best recital."[1] […] "The apparent is but the title of the immanent. The letter and the idiom are but the revealing meaning and the truth within is the dressing of the sounds and shapes and the overlaying of the skin and the form."[2]

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[1] Imam Khumaini, Sharh Duaa al-Sahar, An elucidation of Early Dawn supplication, p. 98.
[2] Op. cit, p. 83.

In reviewing the different approaches that addressed the text along the ages, we arrive at three most notable methods:

1. The first method asserts the requisite to constrict the meaning to the boundaries of the letter in an attempt to comply with the preceding principle. Yet, in the practical course, it tends to strip the letter much of its meanings. This is known as the method of the evident or phenominalism.
2. The second method projects the letter with abundant meanings beyond recognition. This is known as the method of mysticism or the invisible immanent.
3. The third method attaches in theory to the origin of the letter and its evident meaning. At the same time, it is practically keen to balance between the evident and the immanent within the dominating apparent meaning. It does not suppress any potential connotation nor burdens the letter with what it cannot contain -and not with what the mood cannot tolerate.

This issue has been under continuous argumentation since the first Islamic century between those who favour a light context that does not burden the text with what it cannot carry and those who favour an overloaded context with accumulated content that is too heavy to carry. The third method joins between the positive aspect of the first, in abiding by the dominant letter and evident, and the profound aspect of the second, in avoiding the shallow context and pursuing the potential elaboration.

The mystics tend to pursue excessive interpretations, whereas the phenominists tend to remit much connotation and yield to a particular meaning that cannot engage another.

Between the excessiveness of the seekers of the immanent and the remittance of the seekers of the evident, the balanced

approach or method remains the moderate, yet the most unknown and obscured. The latter is viewed by phenominists as mystic and by the mystics as shallow. Yet, it is also viewed -by its followers and those who seek the evident and perhaps the immanent- as the method with foundations in pursuit of the right.

It is impossible to regard justly the notable scholars who had nurtured this moderate method in the line of the infallibles along the ages unless this certain point has been cleared with justice. It is such a dissonance to view and judge the mystic approach and the moderate approach on one scale.
Objectivity entails that the issue be observant of such disorder in the method. The disorder is not limited to a group of researchers on the rational and cultural affair but could encompass all and becomes in itself a general trend that evolves into a method.

The methodology of balance between the evident and the immanent is neither an iron faction nor a political association. It is not subjective to security deterrence or dictatorial suppression. It establishes for the rules of a state of rational maturity that shall protect against methodological error -when taken into consideration.
It is similar to acquiring the knowledge of syntax and logic, yet giving no consideration to such rules in practice, and thus the mistakes.
The arena is not about outbidding and defeating. Those who tend to pursue such an attitude are also subject to stumble, whereas the field is vast open for recommending and consulting. Nonetheless, those who do not respond to

evidence and those who view the mystic and the non-mystic with one eye are strongly renounced.
It is a collective duty, in maintaining the method, to maintain its figures. Identifying those figures is in itself a critical issue that entails deliberation and forethought when making judgments. The damage incurred in associating the non-Sufis to the Sufis is more detrimental than disassociating upon deliberation and conclusive assertion.

The aforesaid, however, does not disclaim that highlighting the methodological disorder denotes a condemnation of an entire rational structure. Approaching the methodological quest is not similar to approaching a partial issue or a subcategory. This denotes that attending to this issue necessitates careful addressing due to its special particularity, where discussion could be confused for slander despite objectivity. The issue is almost similar to surgery.
Accordingly, the methodological dilemma between the evident and the immanent, or the letter and the meaning, is not limited to the mystic understanding, but is more of a two-sided difficulty, where the other side strips the letter in the religious text of most of its connotations based on preceding meanings that it projects while stressing no further indication. As a result, the problem in this respect becomes mystic on its both sides. The Sufis overburden the text with projected implications, whereas the Phenominists consider no potential projection. In this trend, the former becomes the latter and vice versa.

The simplest requisite for a sound understanding of knowledge demands the interpreter to be a careful listener. An interpreter should be thoroughly attentive to the speaker.

Should he wish to include some of his own understanding he should employ so in his good listening. It is to note that the more credible the speaker the more attentive the required listening. And here, involving one's own understanding becomes the more sensitive and critical.
Should reason seek to measure whether the speaker intended an unfamiliar meaning, two points must then be defined:
- Did the speaker really mean that?
- Is the intended meaning possible?

It is utterly not permissible to regard the word as exclusive of its meaning upon an alleged impossibility. This means that the listener has not been listening and that the speaker was not given space to reflect his intended purpose. In such case, the listener is but taking the place of the speaker, concealing what has been said and attributing to what was not meant. To say 'I saw a light pacing the ground' is certainly not meant to refer to the light of the sun or the moon, nor does it indicate any other source of light. The interpreting effort should focus on the intended meaning regardless the possibility of such or not, for the possible is to come later, not sooner.
Nevertheless, asserting a figurative meaning resting on the fact that the true intended meaning is impossible should base on two elements:

- that the impossibility is definite, denoting that it is postulated and conventional as valid for inference; else, the potential true meaning remains possible should the aim be understanding the objective of the speaker rather than putting words in his mouth out of our own assertion.
- that the speaker's broad sense on the issue is not about clarifying what is impossible as a rule yet is

possible as a fact. This becomes clear with profound quest and deep investigation.

In such an understanding, envisaging the impossibility is in itself an indication that should be contemplated, wondering whether a presumption could develop to the extent of evidence.

The general understanding of the inerrant text is of the aforementioned sort. It is set out to establish for the revelation on the Creator, the universe, the man, the creation and the consequent functions outside the familiar materialistic understanding.

The above is but to highlight the sizable interference by those who remit much of the meaning within the text and shift the connotation towards a desired implication. They force themselves between God and the infallible on one hand and the people on the other, and thereby interrupt the course of the inerrant text. The Sufis have also followed suit yet using different instruments that hardly rise up to competition with those who remit. This becomes even more evident when referring to the inerrant text where some passages tend to be explicit in denoting a meaning other than the customary, yet the literal term is capable of encompassing it without effort. Those rallying for the connotation of the letter go past the customary understanding upon projections totally different than the connotation. The following elaboration provides examples.

1. Life and Death:

The inerrant text refers in abundance to life for the believer and death for the atheist in this worldly existence -other than the familiar life and death. The phenominists deem such life

and death figuratively, in the sense of righteousness and clear conscience, in existence or nihility.
In principle, such a tendency is sound in logic and sense. Yet, the quest when contemplating on life and death in the verses and the narratives, pondering that the good or miserable fate in the Afterlife is but an exposure of the kind of life led in the worldly existence, and in examining the correlation between the deed and its assessment and embodiment, in addition to the deed's living entity as presented within the inerrant text shall lead to an obvious conclusion[1] that rejects the figurative meaning and asserts the unfamiliar one. In the realm of the unseen, the unfamiliar is sought to become familiar to our minds because it is an objective reality of an actuality much deeper than what we perceive as reality, though non-objective.

2. Light and Darkness:
The inerrant text refers in abundance to 'light and darkness'[2] of a meaning other than the customary. Nevertheless, Phenominists project a figurative context. However, such a tendency is attractive at the first glance due to objectivity

[1] See interpretation by S. al-Tabatabi' on *"Is he who was dead and We have raised him to life..."* [06:122], Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol. 2, 186 & 290, 4/53, 5/378, 6/168, 7/67 & 337. Also, in 8/103, 9/44. See further interpretation on the more complete life of man in Vol. 12 p 341-342, 13/198, 19/197 & 272, 20/174.

[2] It is worth noting that light in Arabic is mentioned in the singular whereas darkness in the plural. Several interpreters find this to signify the oneness of right and the dispersion of falsehood. *"Allah is the Protecting Guardian of those who believe. He bringeth them out of darknesses into light. As for those who disbelieve, their patrons are false deities. They bring them out of light into darknesses. Such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein."* [02:257]

where reason at least objects to the mystic context sought by the Sufis -although features of such may seem potential. However, it is significant to have the religious address presented in accord with the sound sense. Nonetheless, an objective examining in being abstract and considering of the dominance of the visible (evident) over the invisible (immanent) leads the fair scholar into a conclusion where the sound sense rejects the figurative sense and asserts the presence of true light and darkness other than those we see with the naked eye that is deprived its vision in divine light. If invisible lights, as now commonly known, did exist as vibrations and reflected in a certain environment as true light, it is no longer out of the ordinary to perceive such a connotation.

In any case, the decisive is in the evidence. Some people have their own light through which they see what others cannot. It encompasses them and within they reside. It accompanies them in their walk and joins them in their graves and in their resurrection. And then, everyone shall have his or her own proper light, visible to all creation, where at such time the screen that covered that light in the earthly existence is then removed.

To deem light and darkness as metaphoric deprives many conclusions on such truth, whether in its scientific aspect or its applicable practice in addition to its educational and emotional sentiment. Such deeming consequently directs the inerrant text towards a destination different than the one the text desires for us to travel along. It also contradicts with our alleged compliance with the dominant evident connotation.

For example, we find a text abundant in words denoting several meanings that could be assumed figuratively, yet is implicit. Imam Ali (as) wrote a unique ideological and

political letter to Mu'awiya, in which he said: "O Mu'awiya, Quran is but right, light, guidance, mercy and cure for those who believe. Those who believe not have deafness in their ears and that to them is but blindness."[1]

3. Angels and Devils:

The inerrant text refers to Angels and Devils and to Iblis (Lucifer), throughout. The text is explicit and clear in saying that Angels are assigned for the disposition of certain affairs. They descend on a certain category of people. They descend on the Night of Qadr (Night of Power). They are present by the side of the dying. There is much presence of Angels in the earthly existence and their duties are to a great extent[2]. In return, the devils are on the watch, taking the opportunity to make their attack by misleading. They are mates to some kind of people, brothers to others and descend on every sinful lying wicked.

In this respect, how do phenominists or those who abide by the evident deal with this issue? The text on angels and devils bears no figurative or metaphoric meaning but is rather inclusively explicit. The inerrant text also refers abundantly to the guiding angels and the seducing devils. Angels are entrusted with certain duties related to persons or acts. The text also refers to their presence in groups, where in some occasions there were many. This denotes a totally different picture than the figurative and addressing this issue away from its real course means no else than failing to reach the purpose within the inerrant text.

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[1] Al-Majelsi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 33, p. 155.

[2] Refer to passage on roles of angels: Sheikh al-Mufid, Muhammad bin Muhammad bin al-No'man, (336-413), Tas'hih I'tiqadat al-Imamiyah, p. 101, Dar al-Mufid, Beirut, 1414 AH, 1993 AD.

In addition, the phenominists pursue quite a variant approach in this aspect in particular. They either tend to deny the existence of angels and devils or deny the circle of their presence and interaction. The latter also differs in such denial.

Those who pursue the apparent sense view narratives on descending angels and their protective role in sheltering the believers as a figurative act of God and that angels were mentioned to bring close the picture, such in "this who seeks refuge in Allah from Satan shall be assigned an Angel to deter the devils off his way"[1]. Yet, they would turn away from narratives such as "... shall be assigned seventy thousand angels"[2], and deplore at those who deem the number to be true.

The aforementioned is not about proving the veracity of the narratives, for such is but achieved by examining the documented reference. The above examples were to reflect that those who pursue the apparent meaning do in fact turn away from the candid literal meaning that holds no other. It clarifies how their alleged abidance by the connotation of the apparent is but an abidance by one part of the apparent. [See ref.1]

4. The Nations (Peoples)

What is the intended meaning of the word 'nations' or 'peoples' in the inerrant text? What is the meaning of the following verse: "*There is not an animal in the earth, nor a flying creature flying on two wings, but they are peoples like*

[1] Abu Ya'ala al-Musali, Masnad, Vol. 7, p. 147; al-Majlesi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 38, p. 147, 261, 269.

[2] Al-Musali, Masnad; al-Kilini, al-Kafi, Vol. 2, p. 175, 771, 791, 205, Vol. 3, p. 120.

unto you. We have neglected nothing in the Book (of Our decrees). Then unto their Lord they will be gathered." [06:38]?
What is the role of the hoopoe in Sheba's embracing of monotheism? Was that an individual incident of no reoccurrence?
What is meant by *"we have been taught the language of birds"* [27:16]? And, what connotation does the letter provide, without enveloping?
What is meant by 'an ant said' in *"an ant exclaimed: O ants! Enter your dwellings"* [27:18]? Should we resort to an indicative meaning, such as making a gesture?
Would the indicative be applicable to *"She said: O chieftains! Lo! there hath been thrown unto me a noble letter"* [27:29]?

To argue that the difference lies in speech -that man speaks and non-humans don't, would only confiscate the purpose and alienate from the alleged dominating evident. Should we resort to eloquence or to the wondrous, or yet assume that *'peoples like unto you'* imposes a different course?

In elaborating on the interpretation of the verse *"The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise. Lo! He is ever Clement, Forgiving."* [17:44], Sheikh al-Bahai' refers to creation praising the Creator in a state language whereas Homo sapiens praise in a language of speech. He quotes that others see that each kind of creation have their own language and sounds and some view inanimate beings to praise in their own tongue, basing on the verse "*and there is not a thing but*

hymneth His praise”. Those also argue that should the praise be in a state language then the verse *“but ye understand not their praise”* would need construing. The praising of pebbles in the hand of the Prophet (Pbuh & Hf) does not refer to the state of praising itself but rather to being heard by his companions.[1]

Clearly in the above, the inference is precisely within the letter.

5. The Deed

In addressing the various aspects of the inerrant text, it is clear to the examiner that the text provides for an inclusive and integrated perception of the deed of man, as earlier cited under ‘The Inerrant Text’.

The concise perception is that the deed is a living being that is cloned out of the doer to the extent that the doer himself is also cloned out of his deeds. The deed takes shape of its doer and leads a life inseparable with the life of the doer’s soul, not the body. Should the deed be good, it shall pave the path for the doer and ward off the harm. Else, should the deed be evil it shall cause him harm, or if weak shall take the stand of a spectator such as a companion or a mate.

This living being exists with its owner in the earthly existence. It joins man inseparably as long as man is accountable for his actions. It is not a literary metaphor nor a romantic imagination, but a sound living truth that sight is too

[1] Sheikh Bahaa-ul-din Muhammad bin alHussain bin Abdul Samad al-Bahai’ al-Aameli, date of demise 1031 AH, Muftah al-Falah, Al-Aalami edition, Beirut, p. 101, (Commentary) subsequent to Morning prayers.

blind to see. When the veil shall be removed we shall see that deeds have been accompanying us and we them.[1]

How do those who advocate for the figurative sense of the outward meaning deal with the truth of the deed that the inerrant text has corroborated? What carnage do they perpetrate against the letter when weighing it all on metaphor?

6. Generalisation and restriction of miracles in the Quran

In examining the extraordinary events that are deemed miraculous in the lives of the infallibles we regard such miracles either as divine empowerment or actions permitted by God.

An example to empowerment lies in the resurrection of the four mutilated birds by Prophet Abraham, the healing hand of Prophet Jesus, the devouring staff of Prophet Moses and the splitting moon for Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh & hf), in addition to other incidents in the lives of all prophets and infallibles.

An example to the actions permitted lies in the verse: *"Or the like of him who, passing by a township which had fallen into utter ruin, exclaimed: How shall Allah give this township life after its death? And Allah made him die a hundred years then brought him back to life."* [02:259]; or, *"Bethink thee (O Muhammad) of those of old, who went forth from their habitations in their thousands, fearing death, and Allah said*

[1] "Now We have removed from thee thy covering, and piercing is thy sight this day" [50:22]. Al-Tabatabai' in interpreting this verse says: The covering is but to conceal. Once removed, man shall see his judged fate before him on the Judgment Day. Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol. 6, p. 376.

unto them: Die; and then He brought them back to life.” [02:243]

In addition, there were extraordinary events not in the idiomatic sense but rather as out of the customary and familiarity. These can be interpreted in two ways: either that such miracles did not occur in the sense of inimitability; or, that they took place both as inimitable and non-inimitable.

An example to the first lies in: *“Then we heard his prayer and saved him from the anguish. Thus we save believers”* [21:88]. Certainly, the divine delivery of Prophet Jonah out of the whale’s abdomen in the explicit letter denotes an extraordinary event that could yet become possible in response to prayer.[1]

An example to the second lies in the following verses:

- The sustenance Mary (as) received: *“And her Lord accepted her with full acceptance and vouchsafed to her a goodly growth; and made Zachariah her guardian. Whenever Zachariah went into the sanctuary where she was, he found that she had food. He said: O Mary! Whence cometh unto thee this (food)? She answered: It is from Allah. Allah giveth without stint to whom He will”* [03:37].

- The conversation between the Angels and Mary (as), “*And when the angels said: O Mary! Lo! Allah hath chosen thee and made thee pure, and hath preferred thee above (all) the women of creation”* [03:42]. It is

[1] See interpretation of the verse in: al-Tabatabi’, al-Mizan, 14/315; al-Suyuti, al-Durr al-Manthur, 4/334; al-Tha’albi, Tafsir, 4/99; al-Shukani, Fath-ul-Qadeer, 3/424; Ibn Kuthair, Tafsir, 3/202; al-Qurtubi, Tafsir, 11/334.

noteworthy that conversing is different than calling, as indicated in the next example.

- The birth of John the Baptist (as), though his mother could bear no child. *"And the angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary: Allah giveth thee glad tidings of (a son whose name is) John, (who cometh) to confirm a word from Allah lordly, chaste, a prophet of the righteous."* [03:39] *"He said: My Lord! How can I have a son when age hath overtaken me already and my wife is barren? (The angel) answered: So (it will be). Allah doeth what He will."* [03:40]

In pursuing the outward meaning, would phenominists view the delivery of Jonah as an incident of unique peculiarity that could not reoccur, or would they pay attention to "*Thus we save believers"*? Would they deny sustenance without stint, talking with the angels and the conceiving barren? Should these incidents be viewed as particular and private, though reason leads to no barring of reoccurrence? If so, how would the following verses consist with generalisation and/or restriction within an incident back in history?
"Allah giveth without stint to whom He will" [03:37].
"Allah doeth what He will" [03:40].

The outward approach pursued by phenominists attributes all those incidents to miracles in general and restricts such unusual events to stories reported in the Quran. As a result, such an approach excludes the reported miracles in the Sunnah (tradition of the Prophet Pbuh & Hf) unless they involved a Quranic text. Consequently, all miracles and

wondrous events revealed in the biography of the infallibles become subject to alienation and are crossed out. It also allows for the attack on those who follow in the path of the righteous and believe in their answered prayers. A further consequence of such outward approach is in its shift to the extent of closing the strife of the soul, in practice. It has limited the difference between the Islamic construction of the soul and all other methodologies in what floats to the surface only, without digging to explore the depths of the human soul in which the largest world is enveloped.

To build a character while closing the doors to the unseen cannot but produce a soul of a materialistic structure that is hybrid. Such a character believes in the unseen but renounces it in practice. It limits the unseen to the circle of its occurrence as reported in the Quran but seeks no inspiration for a reoccurrence yet without proof.

In examining the narratives of the infallibles we find they do not go beyond the circle of reported wonders and are based on Quranic precedents[1]. These include: Narratives on their answered prayers; their knowledge of reason whisper; knowledge of the language of birds; healing the ill and resurrecting the dead; their prostration at birth; the beam of light in which they see or attain knowledge; their disposition of distant affairs; and, their narratives on the rewards of humble actions. Nevertheless, those who favour the outward do not accept such reports outside the precise stories within the Quran. Else, their materialistic approach would give way

[1] See Quran stories on Zechariah, Gerges, Solomon, Jesus, Assef bin Barkhiya, and the rewards in *"No soul knoweth what is kept hid for them of joy, as a reward for what they used to do"* [32:17].

and render all connotations against their interest in the understanding of the 'objective reality'. Should one refer to any such miraculous incident, the phenomonists would assert 'this is but the Quran'. Yet, the Quran never at one instance restricted the singularity of the occurrence.

7. The Infallibility of Prophets

It is agreed amongst Muslims on the infallibility of prophets, in principle. Narratives refer in abundance to the human nature of the infallibles. And, although fallibility can be attributed yet the uniqueness of the infallible is very much stressed on in terms of referring to the 'chosen, preferred, certain, guided, faithful, delivered' whom the devil have no access to. The phenominists who pursued the outward accepted the human nature of the infallibles but excluded the uniqueness. This led them into rejecting the infallibility of the prophets. Some tend to declare such a notion whereas others dare not tackle the established axioms. The result is a narrower understanding of infallibility. In all, the outward approach accepts one part and rejects another. The problem lies in stripping the letter off its connotations and making judgments by precedents and projection. Although the letter refers to guilt attributed to the infallible it also refers to the infallible as being beyond the capacity of guilt. The result relies on joining between the two connotations.

In examining the reasons behind questioning the issue on infallibility, the search leads into details that change the result altogether.

To give an example, we refer to the verse:

"Lo! We have given thee (O Muhammad) a signal victory."[48:01]

"That Allah may forgive thee of thy sin that which is past and that which is to come, and may perfect His favour unto thee, and may guide thee on a right path." [48:02]
Another example is in the verse: *"Allah's wish is but to remove uncleanness far from you, O Folk of the Household, and cleanse you with a thorough cleansing."* [33:33]
The first verse refers to the conquest of Mecca. What is the relationship between the victory in Mecca and the forgiveness of sins, which is past and is to come?
In addition, what is the intended meaning of the removal of uncleanness and the pure cleansing?

In the outward understanding, those who follow the apparent project an interpretation that overburdens the text. To them, the conquest of Mecca had been such a bless and a very advanced step in the spread of religion, and as a reward, God had Offered His forgiveness to the prophet and Remitted him off his sins altogether. However, those who adhere to the integrity of the text, as narrated by Imam al-Ridha (as)[1], find the guilt or sin to denote the point of view of the Meccans. To the people of Mecca, the Prophet (Pbuh & Hf) was the most sinful. He had discredited their gods, caused inter-community disorder and led them into war against one another. The conquest of Mecca was a milestone in the transition of the people of Mecca. It changed their view of the Prophet (Pbuh & Hf), their view of their own past and their view towards what was to come from him -that they earlier perceived as

[1] Al-Tabatabi', Tafsir al-Mizan, Imam al-Ridha's (as) discussions at al-Mamun court, Vol. 18, pp 270-272; al-Faydh al-Kashani, Tafsir al-Safi, 5/38; al-Huwaizi, Tafsir Nur al-Thaqalayn, 4/443.

further guilt. Nevertheless, dealing with the victor is another affair, especially when the conqueror is just.[1]

In the above, the interpretation gives a meaning that neither relates to mysticism nor to shallowness. It adheres to the letter and does not touch the sacredness of the infallible.

It is also to note that in reviewing these texts, we reach an understanding where God, in referring to the human nature and potential guilt of the infallibles yet stressing their high status, Has wished for His worshippers not to fall in the deification of prophets. People tend to idolise the leader and even financiers -the likes of Korah, let alone those who were divinely granted certain abilities.

Nonetheless, humans have fallen for their confused perception.

There are those who observe: "*Whoso obeyeth the messenger hath obeyed Allah, and whoso turneth away: We have not sent thee as a warder over them."* [04:80], or: *"Lo! those who swear allegiance unto thee (Muhammad), swear allegiance only unto Allah. The Hand of Allah is above their hands."* [48:10]; and those who observe: *"Allah forgive thee (O Muhammad)! Wherefore didst thou grant them leave ..*" [09:43], or *"And if he had invented false sayings concerning Us"* [69:44] *"We assuredly had taken him by the right hand"* [69:45] *"And then severed his life-artery"* [69:46].[2]

Pursuing the apparent or visible cannot balance between the outward and the inward. Balance can be attained, as summed up by Imam Khumaini, by preserving both the invisible of the

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[1] Al-Tabatabi', Tafsir al-Mizan, 6/369, 1/329, 6/363 & 368, 9/286, with focus in 18/253-258; al-Tussi, al-Tibyan, 9/314.

[2] Further reading, al-Tabatabi', Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol. 6, pp 368-370.

visible and the visible of the invisible. An evident with no immanent and an image with no meaning are like a body with no soul and an earthly existence with no afterlife. The immanent cannot be perceived without its evident and it is not to presume that the Book attended to the image and the skin without pursuing the essence and the core.[1]

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The brief conclusion on the comparative evident (outward) and immanent (inward) can be attained when reflecting on the meanings of the following verses:

"Will they then not meditate on the Quran, or are there locks on the hearts?" [47:24].

"Allah verily hath shown grace to the believers by sending unto them a messenger of their own who reciteth unto them His revelations, and causeth them to grow, and teacheth them the Scripture and wisdom; although before (he came to them) they were in flagrant error." [03:164].

"... Observe your duty to Allah. Allah is teaching you. And Allah is knower of all things." [02:282].

[1] Further reading, Imam Khumaini, Elucidation on Duaa al-Sah'ar, p. 97-98.

III. The Immanent

In examining the inerrant text, its ample meanings, its transparent indicatives and its eloquent correlation we can observe how thoroughly the text is different than any other. This inimitability described as 'bearer of several senses'[1] can be approached when looking into the narratives on the text's outward and inward and the seven or seventy underlying meanings, knowledges or aspects. The number is not about an exhaustive count but is rather an assertion to the multitude of meanings.

Between the straight meaning of the word and the construing of meanings, we find the construed interpretation an independent field of study that is neither limited to the invisible or immanent understanding nor to its deep and multiple connotations.

There rises a need for examining the underlying meaning of the inerrant text, not in the negative popular way, but in a knowledgeable and scientific sense, where it seeks not to impose itself on the visible outward meaning.

There is a vast difference between a shallow approach and an evident trend. However, not seeking a third trend that pursues the deep hidden meaning would stand as a confusing attitude in its objectivity, particularly when the text involved is a religious text.[2]

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[1] Nahj al-Balaghah (Peak of Eloquence), Elucidation by Muhammad Abdu, Vol. 3, p. 136. Also, Shiekh al-Mufid, Awael al-Maqaalat (Early Essays), p. 401.

[2] S. Ne'matullah al-Jazaeri, Nur al-Barahin, Vol. 1, p. 182, on commending those who search out the knowledge, *"those among them who are able to think out the matter would have known it"* [04:83], and dispraising those who do not examine the meanings of the Quran, *"Will*

"The mystic trend emerging in interpretation has focused on the underlying meanings of the Quran, alleging there were up to seventy and condensed by others to seven. This has directed the Quranic interpretation into deep mystic meanings not associated to the word and where no relation between the two can be sensed."[1]

In reviewing the issue on the underlying seven to seventy meanings, scholars who are specialists in the inerrant text have concluded the following:

1. The infallibles have referred to the multiple meanings of the Quranic text in various forms.
2. All Muslims approve the narratives on the inward. In most cases, Shiite resource books refer to seven or seventy underlying meanings, whereas Sunni resource books refer to seven letters or pronunciations. Yet, all these narratives go on to include that each letter has an inside and an outside, or a rule and a purpose.
3. Although these narratives were reported in all collections, some scholars have approached this issue as generally accepted whereas others stated the frequent utterance of the meaning to have been relayed in twenty-one ways. Some scholars have also dedicated entire books on this issue.

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they then not meditate on the Quran, or are there locks on the hearts?" [47:24].

[1] Al-Hayat Al-Tayyiba, Quarterly, Issue No. 8, Year 3, Winter 2002 – 1423 AH, 'The Invariable and the Variable in Understanding the Quranic Text', an interview with S. Muhammad Hasan Fadhlullah.

4. The multiplicity of meanings and a seventy underlying connotations do not contradict with abiding by the outward evident, its dominance and centrality.

In respect of first and second conclusions, Sayed al-Tabatabai' has quoted the narratives by the Prophet (Pbuh & Hf) on the inward and outward and the extended underlying meanings.[1] He has also referred to narratives by Imam al-Baqer (as) as were quoted in Tafsir al-'Ayyashi[2]. Other scholars who confirmed such narratives include al-Haythami[3], al-Mennawi[4] and al-Kattani[5].

As for the third conclusion, Sheikh Akhond al-Khurasani quoted on examining the use of the term (word) in more than one sense that such may give an understanding that one word could envelop seven to seventy underlying meanings.

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[1] Al-Tabatabai', Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol. 1, p. 7. Also in al-Ahsai', 'Awali Al-liali, Vol. 4, p. 107; al-Majlessi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 98, p. 78; al-Namazi, Mustadrak Safinat al-Bihar, Vol. 8, p. 455.

[2] Muhammad bin Masoud al-Ayyashi, Tafsir, Vol. 1, p. 11. Also in, al-Faydh al-Kashani, Tafsir al-Safi, Vol. 1, p. 5.

[3] Nur-ul-din al-Haythami, deceased in 807 AH, Majmaa al-Zawaed wa Manbaa' al-Fawaed, Vol. 7, p. 152, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, Beirut, 1408 AH-1988. Also in Abi Yaala al-Musali, Masnad, Vol. 9, p. 278.

[4] Muhammad Abdul Rauf al-Mennawi, deceased in 1331 AH, Faydhul Qadeer Sharh al-Jamea al-Sagheer, tr. Ahmad Abdul Salam, Vol. 3, p. 60, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, Beirut, First edition, 1415 AH.

[5] Abu al-Faydh Muhammad bin Jaafar Hasan al-Idrisi al-Kattani, deceased 345 AH, Nathm al-Mutanathar min al-Hadith al-Mutawatr, p. 18 & 137, tr. Sharaf Hijazi, Second edition, Dar al-Kutub al-Salafiyah, Egypt.

However, he added, there is no inferring that an underlying meaning was intended [...].[1]

Scholars have discussed the narratives on multiple meanings including those on the underlying 70 in the sense of ‘generally accepted’. According to scholars’ examination of collective texts within their source and of the advanced researches, it can be observed that scholars have rendered such expressions in the sense of a generally accepted manner.

Imam Khumaini quoted that there was no objection to the use of one term in more than one meaning, reasonably. However, the talk on 70 underlying meanings of the Quran is considered obscure and cannot be attained but by those who have waded far deep in such knowledge […].[2]

Sayed al-Ruhani reviews the opinion on the collective condition of a narrative and the opinion of his professor, Sayed al-Khoei. In this respect, he points that S. al-Khoei highlighted two aspects:

-Underlying meanings are sought when used within a singular meaning;

-An underlying meaning is associated to the word although such association may be unknown and unperceivable.

S. al-Khoei favours the second aspect and denies the first. However, S. al-Ruhani finds the first aspect to be more potential, attributing his opinion to the wondrous inimitability of the Quran […].[3]

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[1] Further reading, Al-Akhund Muhammad Kadhem al-Khurassani, deceased 1328 AH, Kifayaft al-Usool, Vol. 1, p. 38, tr. & pr. by Mu’assasat Alulbayt (as) le-Ihyaa al-Turath.

[2] Refer to full passage in Jaafar al-Subhani, Tahthib al-Usool, Vol. 1, p. 72.

[3] Refer to full passage in S. Muhammad al-Ruhani, Muntaqa al-Usool, reported research to Shaheed S. Abdul Saheb al-Hakeem, Vol. 1, pp 318-320.

In referring to the fourth, scholars assert that the multiple meaning within the Quranic text is not related to the use of word in more than one sense. They agree on the possibility of the former but disagree on the latter. Yet, the multiplicity of meanings does not affect the genuineness of the word and its circle.

In taking into consideration the two aspects, we can still conclude that the multiple meaning refers in fact to a single meaning intended within the word. Through this approach, further comprehension can be attained within thorough scientific understanding and knowledge whilst keeping in mind the other conventional connotations.

In this context, S. Tabatabai' explains that the Quran enfolds several grades of meanings arranged vertically without being necessarily enclosed horizontally […]. The use of word in more than one sense could or could not be metaphoric and yet not necessarily a multiple requisite for a singular binding word but rather as applicable implications pertaining to applicable literal word […].[1]

In conclusion, the discussion on both the scientific and the conventional understanding of the immanent (inward or underlying meaning) can be summarised in the following:

1. The word of the Creator is not similar to the word of creation. The inerrant text in general is the word of God. The word is bigger than its human connotation

[1] Refer to full passages, S. Tabatabai', Tafsir al-Mizan, Vol. 3, p. 48, 64-74.

and acts. The language capacity diminishes before the divine intended meanings embraced within the word. It is apparent that the higher the speaker the richer the connotation. For example, an order by a ruler is not similar in implicit to an order by a subordinate. The ruler considers all aspects when giving an order, including the state of the addressees and the arising circumstances. In considering the addresser's nature and position we conclude that the word was certainly given in its intended meaning with no feign.

2. The meanings within the Quranic scripture and the inerrant text in general are beyond our materialistic familiarity and conventional measure of affairs and facts. The vocal word of 'spirit' bears meanings to Avicenna not similar to another person, for example. Should reason be open to the unseen it shall liberate itself from the restriction of the usual and the familiar. Such an approach would widen the scopes yet not beyond the connotation of the word itself.
   In this respect, we find two ways in addressing the inerrant text: excluding the metaphysical dimension assuming a denoted literal word; or, dealing with it as it is and giving consideration to its peculiarity that is the least required for a knowledgeable understanding.
   The materialistic scope can be understood within the verse *"Corruption doth appear on land and sea because of (the evil) which men's hands have done […]"* [30:41]; however, corruption here includes the impact of sins on the physical environment and on reason and the soul in a sense that exceeds the social

understanding and is more correlated to ecological signs.

3. The divine knowledge of God is inclusive of all terms, meanings, indications, consequent implications, related words, phrases and expressions. It is essential to observe the philology in order to provide all possible meanings without departing the conventional understanding. In this respect, the word 'water', to God, is not limited to the usual indication, but urges us to explore its accumulated context, such as appears in the verses:
   "And we send down from the sky water in measure, and We give it lodging in the earth, and lo! We are Able to withdraw it." [23:18];
   "Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were of one piece, then We parted them, and we made every living thing of water? Will they not then believe?" [21:30]

4. The customary connotation of the word is not limited but is very wide to the extent that the casing meaning is in itself very fertile although comparatively shallow as regards the underlying seven to seventy connotations.
   It is to point here to the interpretative or construed meaning. The interpretative (ta'wil) should trace the meaning back to its true intended connotation and to come out of the mystic illusions.
   S. al-Khoei discussed the issue on revelation and interpretation (tanzil & ta'wil) and denied the common rendering in which revelation is to refer to

the revealed text whereas interpretation refers to the intended meaning behind the text[1]. He argued that interpretation (ta'wil) means to trace the word back to its source or to track it down to its consequence, similarly as revealed in the verses:

"*Thus thy Lord will prefer thee and will teach thee the interpretation of events ..*" [12:06]

" *.. Announce unto us the interpretation ..*" [12:36]

"*This is the interpretation of my dream of old ..*" [12:100]

"*Such is the interpretation of that wherewith thou couldst not bear.*" [18:82]

S. al-Tabatabai' argued four interpretative ideologies[2] and clarified in his opinion that the explanation of the interpretative is the actual truth of verdicts, preachments and maxims that are applicable to all definite and analogous verses. He added that the words were confined within the literal as an example to bring the picture close. The text says: *"Lo! We have appointed it a Lecture (Quran), in Arabic that haply ye may understand."* [43:03] *"And Lo! in the Source of Decrees, which We possess, it is indeed sublime, decisive."* [43:04]

[1] See full passage in Imam al-Khoei, al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Quran, p. 224, Dar al-Zahraa, Beirut.

[2] See full passage in S. al-Tabatabai', Tafsir al-Mizan, Study on Interpretative, Vol. 3, pp 44-46, 44-55, to 87; also in Vol. 1, p. 6, 7, 13, 198; Vol. 2, p. 18, 73, 323, 347; Vol. 3, p. 21, 23-27, 36, 38, 41, 43.

In the above, S. al-Khoei agrees that the interpretative refers to the origin and the consequence but within the realm of the immaterial (world of meaning), whereas S. al-Tabatabai' agrees to the same reference but within the real outward realm of existence.

In supporting the latter, the conclusion is that the Quran is the book of truth; its interpretative is perceived within the entire aspect of the truth that shall be revealed to man face to face, as in:

"*Await they aught save the fulfilment thereof? On the day when the fulfilment thereof cometh*" [07:53].[1]

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[1] S. al-Tabatabai', Tafsir al-Mizan, Study on Interpretative, Vol. 8, p. 135, 138-139; Vol. 18, p. 8.

IV. The Constant and the Variable

What are the invariables and the variables in the inerrant text? Can a centuries-old text provide humans of the modern age and the future times with their aspired ideologies and ethics?

An objective answer to such inquiry shall base on two phases:

1. What are the invariables and variables of man? What man is involved in this discussion?
2. Who is the source behind the inerrant text?

In approaching the first question, the discussion on the invariable and the variable shifts from its elocutionary trend to its scientific size. As for the second, both believers and others agree to an accepted notion with relevance rather than rancour.

Phase One

There should be focus given to render reconsideration to man, in terms of his mind, thought, spirit, soul, sensations and feelings. Unless reconsideration is given to man to save him from his seized entity, consideration shall remain in service of the 'thing' and the 'machine' where wealth is the esteem and the inerrant text is marginal or missing.

The inerrant text constructs its systematic approach on man, the noblest of creatures and the master of the worldly existence and the Hereafter, should man employ his entire potentials for the utmost of humanity. While the modern age employs man's potentials in service of animalism where ignorance and imprudence turn humanity into a subordinate thing or object it, paying attention to the infallible or the inerrant text is given no chance.

In discussing the invariable and the variable of the inerrant text, do we review the benefit of man or the benefit of animal and objects? What man are we taking into consideration? Is it the man in whose service the sun, the moon, the orbits and the reigns were put, or is it the man who has been put in the service of product publicity even if spoiled?

Is it possible to determine what invariables and variables are enclosed within the inerrant text under degrading surroundings of man?

The inerrant text preserves the utmost dignity of man, first, in being addressed by his own Creator, and second, in being delivered the message by the infallibles who were humans up to the level of the message in receiving and delivering, with clemency and compassion, to establish for man's pursuit of the right path and the rise of human completeness.

Should consideration be re-granted to man, in theory, the discussion on the invariable and variable of man becomes possible. It is agreed that man's invariable exceeds by large his variable, in thought, conduct and deed.

The invariable can be seen in the following:

Man and thought: Man's perspective of universe, life, his existence within and his natural position is that of being a creature not a creator. As a creature, man possesses a perception on knowledge and ignorance, values, needs, the benefit, the harm, the duty and the reward.

Man and conduct: Man is aware of his social nature, in his relationships with others, as an individual and a member of family and as a head of family -including his other social circles, progressing from receiving to enacting, within his local authority and out to the global.

Man and activity: Man is aware of the needs of his soul and body. He realises the priorities, what to take or leave, how to make a living and what nurtures his soul.

The above with all its consequent circles justifies the question on the nature of variable within the man and stands as a background for the question on the variable within the text. The scientific, industrial and economic revolutions do not conceal the clarity of the picture. The question is about the man not the means. Machines and technology come within man's use and to his benefit or harm. Again here, man stands as the invariable. Civilisation, governance, democracy and the joint decision-making are but all characteristics of a variable age. Governance is but an outline of a content that is either in accord or not with the invariable human and has a value only in maintaining the invariable against margining and protecting the variable from assault. Its competence relies on the extent of sponsoring the human invariable and variable.

The variable within means and machine does not necessitate a variable in needs, senses and feelings. Else, man will be ripped off his humanity and thereby falling for the 'thing'. It is here where the need rises for the invariable. Man's interaction with globalisation puts him at the risk of losing concern in his homeland.

The significance of the invariable lies in its being the true homeland of man's humanity. More concern is required for the abode of thought rather than the geographical settlement. The latter bears no significance until the former is affirmed. The home for humanity is the land of truth, and man's nostalgia is ever for his first domicile.

In an atmosphere pure of the smears of the machine the quest for invariable and variable initiates.

Phase Two

The source of the inerrant text is *"Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright"* [20:50].

This guidance comes in two parts: Defining the human invariable, the theoretical outreach and the consequent practical function; and, defining the required controls in dealing with emerging events that are but details within a project not scaling to the extent of making changes in its structure, known by some senior scholars as the void zone.

To draft a final approach for humanity, progress is required from the first human, who is a prophet, until the end of humanity. The divine legislation drafted for mankind is to cover all stages of the life of man in the earth. Although human legislators are unable to perceive an everlasting legislation, positive laws made by man, nevertheless, do not change per the invariable or variable along the years or decades. Yet, laws, inventions and discoveries do become variable at some point in time.

In this context, we should observe the following:

1. Discussion on the Constant and the Variable in view of Articulation:

The discussion on this issue relates to the comprehension of the text, that is, to approach the articulation. It is not related to the meanings of the text. The comprehension of the articulation is not specific to the religious text but is inclusive of all texts.

2. Genuineness of the constant and the exceptionalism of the variable:

A general approach liberating itself from the invariables of the inerrant text tends to pursue such when referring to the prophetic tradition (Sunnah), though in a good intention.

When relinquishing such approach and pursuing a scientific one, we find that judging genuineness and exclusion depends on observing the following:

1. Generations of scholars agree to the clarity of the text and its strong connotation. They see the dominating nature of the text as invariable with a global mission.[1]

2. The circumstantial size of the variable is measured per the extent of the text application at a particular time.

A text of a variable nature requires that the size of the variable be considerably huge. A text of an invariable nature is totally different and invites for justification of circumstantialities. The application of a coded rule being influenced by the circumstance draws for two conclusions:

1. The practical nature of the coded rule does not nullify the latter's nature as being set for all generations as divinely prescribed. Also, it may not interfere with the nature of the text as a law nor in mission.

[1] Sayed Hasan al-Bajnourdi, al-Qawa'ed al-Fiqhiyah, Vol. 2, p. 53; Sh. Muhammad Ali al-Ansari, al-Mawso'ah al-Fiqhiyah al-Muyassarah, Vol. 3, p. 304.

2. The frame of time in which the infallible took responsibility to apply the inerrant text with need for the variable lasted for eleven years, (preceded by the years of siege and sufferance). This period is not to represent the affirmative of an inerrant text for the eternity of time but is the exceptional frame of time that played as a role model for mankind. The eleven years (after hijra) in addressing the invariable nature of the inerrant text and its global mission gave concern to the exceptional variable. Yet, the infallibles did not approach the circumstantial when addressing the inerrant text as in the prophetic tradition. The quest for the circumstantial within the inerrant text should seek evidence. Should evidence lack then the text is invariable, and thereby the invariable is the basis. Nevertheless, it should not be assumed that circumstantial is applicable to the prophetic tradition and is exceptional in the Quran. The Quran and the prophetic tradition may not be separated. The prophetic tradition is not a mere application of doctrinal provision. Else, what rules or provisions are we examining for invariable and variable? It is such a fallacy to consider the circumstantial along the history of time and consequently leave no space for the invariable. The source of the inerrant text is not history, but God Almighty. The divine formulation of the inerrant text is much beyond man's history, geography and the entire universe.

3. Distinguishing between the invariable and the variable: The text that addresses all generations and is characterised as invariable must define a basis for distinguishing between the invariable and the variable, the time general and the circumstantial. In this respect, it must also define the reference qualified to address this issue. It is evident that a reference for the inerrant text is the infallible himself, exclusively. The inerrant text is the speciality of the infallible. Judging the invariable as circumstantial and variable outside the commissioning of God and His will is but a heresy, and consequently, the inerrant text may not have been left without a very clear and distinguishable basis. The basis perceived is in defining the affirmative within the inerrant text and the exception. Should the circumstantial be the affirmative then it should be defined and that the invariable is what has been proven with evidence, and vice versa. The practical interpretation for such distinction is in an absolutely clear affirmative and exception. The truth concluded within the text is that the invariable is genuine and the variable is exceptional. Evidences surrounding the exception prevent its transformation by mistake into an invariable.

   Senior scholars along centuries of persistent work agreed that the significance is in the generality of the articulation not in the particularity of the instance. They have researched and documented the particular and the general and have agreed that the completion and perfection of religion within its Quranic basis cannot be consistent with the genuineness of the circumstantial and the exception of the time general. Faith, as defined

collectively, includes faith in the unseen and asserts that the mission of the infallible cannot be affected by practical application or incidents in history.
Those who carefully examine the inerrant text by following the teachings of the infallibles are the ones concerned with distinguishing the circumstantial on the basis of the genuineness of the invariable. They have well succeeded in their efforts and are still in pursuit. However, they have never faced such a problem that we presume to confront, though it is nothing but a scum.
There is a big difference between the result concluded by a research on the invariable and the variable upon objective motives that take into consideration all characteristics of scientific research within the specific field and a general research with motives controlled by the lobby of commercial culture that is far more dangerous than a commercial advertisement. The latter promotes for our own selection of a product for a physical need, whilst the former imposes on us its own choice of ideology and culture.

The first condition in examining the facts of the inerrant text is by liberating ourselves of the heinous globalisation circle of the commercial culture.
Nonetheless, this should be approached with keen modesty and caution of slippage.
"Whosoever surrendereth his purpose to Allah while doing good, he verily hath grasped the firm hand-hold. Unto Allah belongeth the sequel of all things." [31:22]

3. God's religion unattainable by the mere mind:
There are certain established basics (invariables) in our modern world that are assumed untouchable, such as independence, national security, civil peace, law, state security, his majesty the king, the presidential reverence, and so on.

The inerrant text presents religion as the highest invariable beyond the inflictive reach or understanding of minds, let alone being subjected to moods. The source of religion is God Almighty. Yet, many of those passionate for the aforementioned established basics dared to touch religion and theorised in place of God. People are required under such approach to respect the so-called 'thought' and to admire with respect the 'creativity' of such creative thinkers, such as Salman Rushdi. Else, they are labelled narrow-minded and 'Talibans'.

It is no wonder that the school promoting the transform of man into object keeps no real sense of religion or thought. In the 'dictionary of globalisation', man's thought and mind do not have an entry but are replaced with consumption and profit revenue.
The absurd is in the educated colonised person, the Muslim in particular, who allows for himself to be dragged into such human calamity. In our modern time, anyone is permitted to speak in any field he or she pleases.

Life is based on an rational principle by which it cannot populate but with. It requires us to seek a specialist in a scientific way. Should mind lead us to the specialist, we tend

to accept and follow his consultation -be that a physician, a lawyer, an engineer, a technician, an electrician or a plumber. Religion introduces this principle in the sense of devotion or following (taqlid) of a jurist (mujtahed). However, modernists rise to challenge such approach in the name of the modern age.

Religion being not attained by mere minds means that minds should be activated in search for the divine knowledge. Once the evidence proves reasonable and logic we yield to the proof, and thereby to devotion. As much as understanding the laws requires us to seek legal advice, we are bound to seek legislative reference. The most critical in understanding religion without reference is in judging the invariable and the variable. Moreover, we tend to rush for judging a circumstantial justifying that such rules were referred to by the infallible or basing our presumption on the firmly accepted presence of abrogator and abrogated verses.

According to the infallible, the circumstantial can be defined in the following:

1. It was stated by the infallible as circumstantial.
2. It was stated by the infallible as abrogated.
3. It was proven by another evidence to be of a particular or a circumstantial occurrence.

The infallible is the only reference on the condition of circumstantialities. A scholar of Shari'ah may not introduce theories that do not agree with the accepted principles within Fiqh and Usul (jurisprudence and principles of Islamic law).

It is to note that most approaches made on the invariable and the variable are inconsistent except with the recent school on 'opinion and favourable' –the latter having had boldly accepted independent interpretative judgments opposite the inerrant text, in violation of the 'affirmed invariable' and 'exceptional variable'.

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V. The Wonderment

There are main questions pertaining to wonderment that can be raised. These include:

- Is wonderment valid as evidence, or is it a spontaneous or necessary reaction that calls for inquiry?
- What is the relationship between wonderment and favourable regard?
- What is the volume of wonderment unsupported by evidence in approaching the inerrant text within the modern ideology?

It is known that the first part of the first question is not being observed theoretically, although a practical compliance makes the most challenge in scientific research. As for wonderment and the favourable regard, they are almost twinned, if not cloned, though unrelated.

Ignorance leads an ignorant to consider his little knowledge a scale for acceptance or rejection, measuring whatever he finds proper or favourable as right. Such establishes his wonderment as evidence, and this composite ignorance leads a scholar to strictly denounce all that he regards unfavourable. He would argue that being unfavourable proves his renounced wonderment. Such analysis clarifies the cloning of wonderment out of favourable regard. The crucial effect of such approach on research methodology and truth in general may not be underestimated. Such an approach disarms the scholar of his scientific evidence, arms him instead with illusive evidence and transforms him into an ignorant. It is even of more gravity when this approach is pursued in the religious field. Although the latter is based on evidence and proof, the former's pretence of wonderment lends no ear to evidence or space to establish for a proof. The

favourably regarded is usually very tiny compared to wonderment. This makes wonderment more critical than the favourable, despite the gravity of the latter.

The inerrant text discussed the issue on wonderment that lasted for a thousand years:
"And We verily sent Noah unto his folk, and he said: O my people! Serve Allah. Ye have no other Allah save Him. Will ye not ward off (evil)?" [23:23]
"But the chieftains of his folk, who disbelieved, said: This is only a mortal like you who would make himself superior to you. Had Allah willed, He surely could have sent down angels. We heard not of this in the case of our fathers of old." [23:24]
"Then, after them, We brought forth another generation;" [23:31]
"And we sent among them a messenger of their own, saying: Serve Allah, Ye have no other Allah save Him. Will ye not ward off (evil)?" [23:32]
"And the chieftains of his folk, who disbelieved and denied the meeting of the Hereafter, and whom We had made soft in the life of the world, said: This is only a mortal like you, who eateth of that whereof ye eat and drinketh of that ye drink." [23:33]
"And if you obey a mortal like yourselves, then most surely you will be losers:" [23:34]
"Doth he promise you that you, when ye are dead and have become dust and bones, will (again) be brought forth?" [23:35]
"Begone, begone, with that which ye are promised!" [23:36]
"There is naught but our life of the world; we die and we live, and we shall not be raised (again)." [23:37]

The above wonderment is no different than the following wonderment of Lucifer:
"And when We said unto the angels: Fall down prostrate before Adam and they fell prostrate all save Iblis, he said: Shall I fall prostrate before that which Thou hast created of clay?" [17:61]
"He said: Seest Thou this (creature) whom Thou hast honoured above me…" [17:62]

In a thorough reading of the Quranic texts we can see how the chieftains and the pharaohs argued the infallibles by resorting to wonderment in a way similar to the materialistic ideology of today. In pursuing total objectivity this shows, in one aspect, that the message of the infallible based on evidence has been and is being an issue of modernity opposite a mere wonderment that has been and still is a backwardness. In a further examination, the verses show a link between atheism and denial of the Hereafter on one hand, and luxury and alleged logic of wonderment on the other. It in turn reveals that the true reason behind wonderment, though at different degrees, is resurrection and life after death.
"They say: When we are dead and have become (mere) dust and bones, shall we then, forsooth, be raised again?" [23:82]
"We were already promised this, we and our forefathers. Lo! this is naught but fables of the men of old." [23:83]
"Those who disbelieve say: Shall we show you a man who will tell you (that) when ye have become dispersed in dust with most complete dispersal still, even then, ye will be created anew?" [34:07]
"That would be a far return!" [50:03]

"And our forefathers?" [37:17]
"Say: Ye, in truth; and ye will be brought low." [37:18]

This wonderment consequent to 'cloning' is more damaging to reason. In a practical sense, to such wondering people the larger consideration they give to their ego the tinier the truth is significant to them. Following evidence and refraining from judging without a proof is opposite to wonderment. It is also reached by a tinier ego opposite a larger truth. In this context, we can understand the relationship between luxury and the wonderment that resurrection was received with:
"... and whom We had made soft in the life of the world..." [23:33]
"Lo! heretofore they were effete with luxury" [56:45]
"And used to persist in the awful sin." [56:46]
"And they used to say: When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then, forsooth, be raised again" [56:47]
"And also our forefathers?" [56:48]

Luxury is sustained by contentment with the earthly life, reassurance in the worldly existence and clinging to the earth. This leads into heedlessness that builds for making alleged evidence out of wonderment:
"Lo! those who expect not the meeting with Us but desire the life of the world and feel secure therein, and those who are neglectful of Our revelations." [10:07]
"... but he clung to the earth and followed his own lust …" [07:176]

Such are the heedless and so are the clung. They seek no evidence but their own lust. Clinging is the root for

wonderment. The other face for heedlessness is in setting out to evidence by means of mere wonderment. The basic point in this 'wondering in disbelief' approach comes from viewing the seen world (visible) as the entire truth, not preceded nor succeeded by anything else. This view is the 'common denominator' between all deniers of the truths of the inerrant text. Their denial is variable from absolute to partial. The gravest within the partial is the practical non-belief in the unseen (invisible) whilst disbelieving some unseen facts and accepting others. Certainly, the list of wonderments pertains to unseen aspects. Yet, the inerrant text carries the message of the unseen to render for a man's insight towards the complete picture -that is more invisible than visible. Wonderment stands as a wall preventing man from reaching his perfection. It is worst when wonderment is deemed a methodology. Individual crimes, massacres and mass annihilation are being perpetrated upon luxury that established itself from clinging to the world of the visible. Affectionate clinging to earth reaches an extent where truth seizes to be visible and denial takes the role of a bandit who hijacks the way to the truth. It is here where the world lured and seduced by the earthly existence turns into a hijacker of the path of those who seek God. It may sound unusual to say that the mystics and the phenominists are equal in this approach. However, ill phenomena are one regardless how different. Similarity is in abandoning evidence and adoring an ego and its favourable 'extinction'. It is a view that prefers to fight until the last breath against what it regards as unbelievable wonderment. This is applicable to both the materialistic atheist and the lured mystic.

The admixture between the true and the false produces confusion, neither a right nor a wrong. Imam Ali (as) said on the 'admixture of right and wrong': "The basis of the occurrence of evils are those desires which are acted upon and the orders that are innovated. They are against the Book of Alláh. People co-operate with each other about them even though it is against the Religion of Alláh. If wrong had been pure and unmixed it would not be hidden from those who are in search of it. And if right had been pure without admixture of wrong those who bear hatred towards it would have been silenced. What is, however, done is that something is taken from here and something from there and the two are mixed! At this stage Satan overpowers his friends and they alone escape for whom virtue has been apportioned by Alláh from before."[1]

The inerrant text challenges those wondering to present their evidence, pretence and proof: *"Say: Bring your proof (of what ye state) if ye are truthful."* [02:111] & [27:64].
"Say: Bring your proof (of their godhead). This is the Reminder of those with me and those before me, but most of them know not the Truth and so they are averse." [21:24]

The 'reminder' the infallibles brought, as revealed in the aforementioned, is rendered in the verses as 'proof':
"O mankind! Now hath a proof from your Lord come unto you, and We have sent down unto you a clear light" [04:174]
"He who crieth unto any other god along with Allah hath no proof thereof. His reckoning is only with his Lord. Lo! Disbelievers will not be successful." [23:117]

[1] Nahj al-Balaghah, "Peak of Eloquence", English edition translated by Askari Jafri.

The inerrant text in pursuing proof and highlighting its significance refers to it as ‘authority’ or ‘warrant’. The verses say:
“... Then bring some clear authority (warrant).” [14:10]
“These, our people, have chosen (other) gods beside Him though they bring no clear warrant (vouchsafed/authority) to them. And who doth greater wrong than he who inventeth a lie concerning Allah?” [18:15]
“And saying: Be not proud against Allah. Lo! I bring you a clear warrant (authority).” [44:19]
“And in Moses (too, there is a portent) when We sent him unto Pharaoh with clear warrant (authority)” [51:38]
“They say: Allah hath taken (unto Him) a son - Glorified be He! He hath no needs! His is all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. Ye have no warrant for this. Tell ye concerning Allah that which ye know not?” [10:68]
“What aileth you? How judge ye?” [37:154] *“Will ye not then reflect?”* [37:155] *“Or have ye a clear warrant (authority)?”* [37:156] *“Then produce your writ, if ye are truthful.”* [37:157]

The inerrant text clarifies that an opposite to a just warrant or authority is falling for guessing and desiring, such in:
“They are but names which ye have named, ye and your fathers, for which Allah hath revealed no warrant. They follow but a guess and that which (they) themselves desire. And now the guidance from their Lord hath come unto them.” [53:23]

The soul desires what it favours or wonders. The reason for such desire is related to ego, such in: *“Lo! those who wrangle concerning the revelations of Allah without a warrant having*

come unto them, there is naught else in their breasts save pride which they will never attain. So take thou refuge in Allah. Lo! He, only He, is the Hearer, the Seer." [40:56]. This pride is but the result of being allured by the visible world, resorting to contentment and reassurance with the earthly existence and clinging to earth.[1]

In examining the vocabulary within the inerrant text, we notice that denying the truth is described in association with false deities, pharaohs, Korahs, chieftains, the effete with luxury and the corrupt. These deniers in general are haughty. The inerrant text uses 'clear warrant' in return for their 'wonderment'.

The above establishes for a fact that haughtiness should not be underestimated. It becomes further apparent when the ego yields to wonderment. The latter is of more severity and leads into pharaoic haughtiness. The inerrant text clarifies this situation in the verse: "*… there is naught else in their breasts save pride…"* [40:56]

The inerrant text seeks to unlock any barrier or fence blocking the transcendence of man towards higher status, even transcending in the Hereafter, as the verse clarifies:

"And greater (far), acceptance from Allah. That is the supreme triumph." [09:72]

It is worth noting that all points referred to under 'the evident' section are being viewed with wonderment if not even strong denial. Such wonderment and its consequent denial block the path of knowledge before those who wonder and fail to present an inclusive concept of their own ideology.

[1] See interpretation of Quran vocabulary, Al-Tarihi, Tafsir Ghareeb al-Quran, p. 274; and other interpretation books including al-Ragheb al-Asfahani, al-Tousi, al-Kashani, etc.

For example, they find embarrassment in referring to the cow, the donkey, the ant and the hoopoe that played roles in miraculous events. They project such acts on the ‘unseen’ and consider favourably a mythical connotation.

The soul is shaped within the laboratory of the unseen. The seen world gives little shade. Souls are built with faith, and truth is but from the unseen to the unseen.

The problem of wonderment is in replacing faith in the unseen with faith in the seen and thereby creating the cultural and ideological dilemma that fails to nurture the soul towards a structure shaped by the inerrant text.

Furthermore, it becomes most crucial when those who are keen for knowledge tend to deny the levels reached by those who know, and in this manner, the former tend to wonder about the unseen attained by the latter and thereby end in opposing the unseen rather than honouring it.

Imam Khumaini wrote: “I first of all entrust you (my son) not to deny the level of knowledge of those who know. Such is but the trend of the ignorant. Beware of associating with such deniers, for those are only bandits seizing the path for truth.”[1]

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[1] Sahifah Nour (Farsi), Vol. 20, p.155, Imam Khumaini’s will to his son, Ahmad, 15 Rabih I, 1407 Lunar Hijri.

VI. The Ornament

It was reported that Imam Jaafar al-Sadeq (as) said: "All narratives should reflect the Quran and the Prophetic tradition (Sunnah). Any narrative (hadith) inconsistent with the Book of God is but an ornament."[1]
This principle is the most observed by scholars concerned with the examining of the narratives: the general and the specific, the isolated, the equal or the outbalanced and probably the abrogated.

These examinations tend to answer to the following questions (in addition to other questions of a further detailed nature):

- The difference between narrations of Sahih (sound or of authentic reference) and other narrations.
- The rule on one or two witnesses within the Quran or the Sunnah in each text.
- The difference between what is inconsistent with the Quran and what is in contrary.
- The rule of the inconsistent and the contrary in roots and branches.
- Should the narrative be inconsistent, does it convey that it was not said by the infallible or that it has no pretence? What is the difference?
- How can inconsistency or contradiction be judged?
- How to join between such texts and decisive texts that are inconsistent with the Quarn in the apparent (outward) sense or that are in contrary in the general sense?

[1] Sh. Murtadha al-Ansari, Faraed al-Usul, al-Fikr al-Islami, Qum, 1419 L.AH., Vol. 1, p. 243.

- How to judge the contrary when divided into contrast, common and absolute common? What is the rule in each case?
- What is the size of the problem faced in this scientific course?

Studies carried out by scholars have reached some significant conclusions:

1. To accept the apparent meaning of these narrations is in contradiction with the spirit of legislation that, within the law, requires a contradicting public to private, and otherwise. It calls for a necessary presence of the broad and the restricted.
2. Some of these narrations are revoked because they contradict with the Quran and the absolute Sunnah.
3. Confirmed narrations that are consecutive or recurrent necessitate rejection of those in contrast with the Quran, where possible conventional joining is out of question.

To label a text in question as ornament requires scientific evidence that can prove that joining between an alleged text and both the Quran and the Sunnah is impossible. Else, without such proof, revoking religious rules would become a loose practice that invites for the demolishing of the Shari'ah (Islamic Law). Yet without a proof, accepting the text would be an ornament whilst the questioned inerrant text remains without proof.

Reported narratives on divine orders could be different than those revealed in the Quran but not contradicting. This comes within the conventional grouping between a divine rule and its details. For example, *"Establish worship, pay the poor-*

due” [02:43]. Here, the rule is given but the details were rendered in the narratives.
Another example appears in two different verses where difference is not a contradiction but a rendering of further detail, such in:
“Allah receiveth (men's) souls at the time of their death” [39:42]; and,
“The angel of death, who hath charge concerning you, will gather you (take your souls)” [32:11].
Here, there is no contradiction in the meaning but a clarification on the angel assigned to carry out the order of God.

It is such a loss to reject some narratives based on impossible grouping between a verse and a narration. Such rejection has evolved into a methodological approach where entire classified narrations were rejected alleging that those on abundant reward, for example, were inconsistent with the Quran, and those on lights of pre-creation were derived from Israelite accounts, or that narratives on the special place of Ahlulbayt (as) were rendered by exaggerators. In fact, most narratives on roots and branches under the classification of immanent and evident that are beyond the familiar materialistic sense are being underestimated and banned as ornament. Such an approach is basing on any inconsistency with the Quran without deep examining. This has been the tendency of both Islamists and non-Islamists. Non-Islamic objectivists do realise that they approach an inerrant text that is outside their knowledge. They seek support from Islamists to build on their realism and illumination to achieve objective goals that are far from those sought by the Islamists. Not all

the latter go along the same course. Some are followers who dare not go beyond the customary and the familiar.

This trend has been appearing amidst Islamic movements. It is unfortunate that such movements are left without a broad-minded jurisprudent supervision that can address modern issues. Also, although Islamic movements have done well in calling for Islam as the sole remedy to the problems of the Muslim nation, they have failed in general in adopting a comprehensive concept based on a vision of Islamic fiqh and doctrine. Such a vision should be consistent with the invariable basics and capable of dealing with critical issues - in a sense that keeps the genuineness of religion and meets the general trend agreed on by jurisprudents. This is not about accountability but is rather on the separation that is taking place between Islamic activists and non-activist Islamists. However, they complete one another though their pursuits are otherwise.

The activity of Islamic movements in lacking the required qualification for competition in the world has been faced with excessive challenges in the global arena -where others take control over economy, intelligence, culture, education, society, security and politics. Such a challenge cannot be taken unless possessing a perfect mind that can think beyond what others can perceive. It is faith in the unseen and putting trust in God, on the basis of *"Make ready for them all thou canst"* [08:60]; and, *"How many a little company hath overcome a mighty host by Allah's leave!"* [02:249].

Certainly, the equation for challenge is briefed within "*truly it is hard save for the humble-minded*" [02:45]. Those who

believe in the unseen are the most realistic and most mindful. They realise that martyrdom is the passage to the final abode.

However, constructing an Islamic movement of such belief must be balanced. It should neither forget the visible while pursuing the invisible, nor forget the invisible while adapting with the objective lived visible. An Islamic movement needs to establish a balanced approach in all aspects of its social structure. It faces the most immense challenges at its community institutions.

One of the most critical challenges the Islamic movements have been facing in their societies is the approach that tends to judge what is favourable as ornament, counting on the verse *"... Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you..."* [02:185]. And thereby, people tend to free themselves from both desirable and undesirable duties.

Yielding to ornament does not cease but advances to become applicable even to prescribed duties and forbidden acts. And finally, the accumulating ornament reaches an extent where it tends to develop its own approach on diligent jurisprudence in doctrine and fiqh. When Islamic movements allow for such, they enter into a new stage where they end in disassociating themselves from their roots and basics.

Such an issue is beyond the discussion of this research. However, Islamic active movements have the opportunity to meet should they yield to Imam Khumaini's concept on shaping of the Islamic character. Another opportunity remains available, theoretically, in joining together under the leading umbrella of the Authority of the Guardian. This

should result in unity of the nation and serves in putting together our religious practices within one concept, instead of having several references for activists to judge on issues and doctrinal and jurisprudent affairs within each and every movement.

Amidst the challenges faced at the global level, it is worth pointing that the policy on containment has not been limited to politics but has been infiltrating into ideology and culture. In this respect, the incorrect application of ornament has been for the last half century serving as the wave of cultural containment of our societies.

The foremost risk to our understanding of the infallible and the text lies within us. It is upon the results of our misunderstanding that others build their own actions, pushing us farther back in history and driving us deeper towards materialism.

In this brief discussion, it is not to deny that there are some Islamists not classified within Islamic movements who tend to go for doubt opposite the obvious. Their theories, however, are confined with no effect.

Imam Khumaini in urging for the necessary adherence to the methodology pursued by the devoted forefathers has frequently pointed to observing the Essential Fiqh (Jawaheri) and the comparison with the Traditional Fiqh (Taqlidi).

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Chapter 4

Between Modernity and Eternity

I. The Mirage of Modernism

I may have demonstrated that the message of the infallible as borne by the text is a message of the jurisprudence of heart and life in the human rationale.
The aims of this chapter are:

1. To affirm that this message, in its lesser extent, is a project into the promising future of mankind, that would allow the full utilization of the efforts of the infallibles and the efforts of others who employed common sense and found the correct path, albeit in different ratios, to participate in the process of experimental accumulation and knowledgeable maturation in a way that would lead humankind to fulfil its aspirations by means of listening to the ultimate truth that comes through the apical learning from the inerrant text, which would enable the establishment of a universal governance of justice that would never ignore reason in favour of human desires or permit illusion to overwhelm human desires, nor would it permit any confusion between means and ends that would make mankind as servants of machine or make machine masters of the universe who would only be worshipped to fulfil man's desires.
2. And the larger extent of the message is eternity. The message then becomes a project for the whole present and the whole future including after the seen world.
3. Confirmation of the afore mentioned aims by means of strict monitoring of any barriers that would impede "good learning" from the inerrant text by confusing the brain or restricting free thinking with illusive rules

that those barriers had so far succeeded to implement as solid resources or inevitable outcomes. The truth is that all these are not but pure mirage.

The most dangerous of these obstructions, illusions, or statues –as in Francis Bacon method- is the mirage of modernism, where ".. *their deeds are as a mirage in a desert, the thirsty one supposeth it to be water till he cometh unto it and findeth it naught..*" [24:39].

What I am saying had also been illuminated further in the section titled "The Invariable and the Variable". My aim is not to deny the fact that each era has its own features, but to reject any mirage that is formed by the brightness of such features that could blind our vision away from the truth to the extent that the whole past becomes considered as ancient or traditional or folkloric or naive or primitive while modernism becomes known as dominance or new or the norm or the electronic buttons or the remote control or even the foreign language and its likes.

Modernism in reality is nothing but an idea that is subject to the normal rules of all other ideas and not as a commercial item on sale.

Modernism is a relative concept whereas what one sees as primitive might be seen by another as modern and this "another" could be the correct one.

Modernism claims loudly the following two features as its own:

1. That it belongs to the world of realty.
2. That it is the container of and not a replacement of other facts of life.

The first feature dictates that it should be dealt with just like all other facts because it is considered larger than time. The second feature means that it could not be used to present other facts in a way that would show it to be larger than those other facts or show that time is larger than every other fact. Modernism, therefore, seems to be a modest entity that rests naturally among other worldly facts and shares in maintaining those facts..

The true modernism is a feature of either a constant or variable fact, whereas in the former case it remains as a permanent obligatory feature while in the latter case it migrates at the end of its time or whenever metamorphism starts.

When the “Inerrant Text”, which is the storage of all true secrets, becomes the subject of research, modernism becomes originally an obligatory and constant feature while the exception is that it becomes a comparative feature of what had expired and transformed onto a variable.

And as humankind becomes the universal axis, according to the wishes of the Almighty God, modernism gets related to whatever may crystallize the jewel of humanity. Any form of regression would scratch, deface or even deform it.

Enough has already been presented in support of the notion that originality in humankind is the constant (invariable) and not the variable.

It becomes clear, therefore, that modernism as a subject that would invite interests is the modernism of offer and style that encompasses newly discovered facts that may enhance the original and basic facts which remain forever as the modern constants.

There is no objection to attribute modernism to the newly discovered facts provided that two factors are taken into consideration:

a. That the modernity of those facts is confirmed somewhere else where its position towards the truth is checked without being part of an attempt to prove or disprove modernism.
b. That the modernity of those facts is a feature of the discovery and not of the truth.

This would lead us to conclude that attributing modernism with the concept of independence or with the illusion that it has no room for errors or mistakes is a form of a deliberate deception and not just another rhetorical in a world of rhetoric. Evidence that this is a dominant feature nowadays can be found in the concept of objectivity and sentimentality.

It is logical to consider that the search for anything new may become a target that feeds into the constant, but to use the constant as a means to getting mankind soiled while employing such method is neither logical nor comprehensible. We only have to look at what had become of the "Family" under the prevailing concept of modernism to realize the risk in adopting such a lethal concept. There is no difference between "common" or "elite" people in the erroneous application of the concept of modernism even though it is not, usually, easy to distinguish how bad the situation of the elites is. There is a need to explore modernism outside the boundaries of the octopus of the "Pharaonic American Circle". Otherwise it would be nothing but an attribute to the intellect of the royal court. Based on such commitment it becomes inevitable that we suspect anything the pharaoh promotes to the extent that we always

conclude- on the basis of cultural conviction "conspiracy theory"- that he was at fault.

Is it not time that we ought to realize that the type of modernism they are promoting is nothing but a screen that appears at times, or a well planned bombardment that appears at other times, to disguise their plans for an eminent invasion?

It is possible, from what we had presented so far, to consider looking for something more modern than modernism, or postmodernism, taking into account the "original rationale" as a measurement instead of the "technical rationale" which is more advanced than the mere "technicality" that is the normal measurement at present. The conviction is that the core of real evaluation would be the "work" and not the machine, also that any measurement for evaluation would be factual and not conventional.[1]

Such a vision is characterized by its originality and depth with a main component that would provide the foundation for building a structure that places the concept of eternity, instead of all forms of modernity, as the ultimate aspiration for all humankind.

The cultural ideology that encompasses both worlds of the seen and unseen would never succumb to the shining concept of modernism because it belongs to the wider and more welcoming college of eternity. It will deal with the concept of modernism and any of its esteemed virtues, but without letting any of its shining rays blind its vision, and placing it in its natural position for exploring the constant.

[1] See: Dr. Mohammad Jawad Larijani: Al Tadyon Wal Hadathah, pp 209-209-210, (First Ed, al-Ghadeer, Beirut, Lebanon, 1421, 2001)

The greatness of humanity is proportional to its residing within the eternal heaven, while on this earth: “they are bestowed within it” and to its tranquil dwelling of this earth fully aware that it is on the right path to where its future would be the ultimate reward of such tranquillity and calmness.

The greatness of humanity would never be proportional to any everlasting uncertainty or the overwhelming confusion or any panting after the new that may befits oneself with modernism. It will always tend to seek a restful corner from which it would launch itself into the struggle towards higher aspirations and perfection. To expect humanity to stay in a state of hesitancy, unaware of what may come into its way, is something astronomically illogical. And that is exactly what they promote under the shining concept of modernism.
Modernism remains, however, as a necessity but only as a modern means of offer and presentation for material exchange and achievements.

II. The Cultural Independence

The central question here is:
How do we deal with the Infallible and the Text? Which is the same as saying: How do we deal with the Inerrant Text?
This question can be subdivided into many questions.
How does the Movement of International Culture deal with the Inerrant Text?
How do we, the believers in heavenly messages, deal with it?
How do we, Muslims, the followers of the final message, deal with it?
Would the Movement of International Culture- of whose orbit we form a part- consider the rational constants with its curricular roots as its resources in dealing with the Text, or would it confuse what is wrong and what is right, and continue in its biased path on the wrong side. Such a path persists on employing the "factual" curricular mistakes to the extent that it excludes those who do not accept it as deniers of logics or refuters of style.
Where is the reality in severing our world from both its precursor and successor on the basis that such reality is the whole objective reality?!
And what sort of a stylish ideology that would mix up the citing of body and soul?
And where is the rationality in denying the laws of logic, the top of which is the law of "Causality"?
In summarising the attitude of the Movement for International Culture towards the Infallible and the Text, we find the present situation is somewhat preferable to what the prophets came against with their own people: "*And they say: When we are bones and fragments, shall we forsooth, be raised up as a new creation?*"[17:49].

This is the logic of “astonishment” and its culture, enough of such vacuous nonsense.
It might not be a complete oddity to find such attitude amongst the non believers, but it is quite odd to see some believers being drawn along with the “astonishment” that is the backbone of the materialistic “style”.
What is it with us Muslims denying the style of logics that cost the Infallibles all their martyrs and their sacrifices, and left us with the task of patronizing it and delivering its message to the rest of the world?
Does our appointed “methodology” provide a logical style with clear foundations and fixed patterns or are we confusing logics and denial “astonishment” with objective and non-objective reality that would place us amongst those outside the circle of logical constants who seem to distort right and wrong.

Is it not our duty to take up “methodology” with all the enthusiasm and care it deserves and deal with it according to its crucial position at the centre of a true and civilized structure, and to deal with the “Inerrant Text” as the fertile soil and environment that such a safe methodology would sprout from? This methodology would be the only capital and the only path for mankind on its way to fulfil the jurisprudent aspirations of heart and life.
Do we sense any cultural attachment to all those infallible treasures of knowledge that address all humans as one family and encompass all signs of enlightenment and serene guidance? And how much do we really care about cultural independence, before we ask how proud of it we are? Is the “cultural independence” that we mostly care about, especially when we talk about originality, not so similar to our

"complete" political independence? Dissonant statehood or even slaving behind the American Master are nothing more than a crass affirmation of our alleged political independence similar to all other shades of methodology. Our cultural and rational identity is no better than our regional or national identity with all its faults and shortages in all fields of economy, security or military.

It all becomes quite clear as we insist, when facing the natural outcomes of a cultural or rational methodology- where America is nothing but its worse vanguard- with a harmful strife and martyr will, that the way to achieve it is by weakening the right and safe logical style that our cultural, rational or doctrinal identity is based upon.

The blatant materialist and the "blind" loyalist are equally alike with this regard.

We are called upon to give serious thought to our cultural independence which does not mean an enclosure unfit for natural intellect or culture. It does not also mean any racial or regional differentiation. It actually bears the implication of whatever the term of political independence would mean to any nation that aspires to possess every shade of safe openness and constructive development. It would be the cornerstone that radiates a feeling of contentment and self satisfaction towards the truth, its knowledge and what it leads to in all shades of life, mind or heart endeavours.

The sovereignty for any nation is not a monopoly for any particular individual but, like air and light, it is free for all, and so will be the true methodology that encompasses the cultural independence from which all political affairs,

including political independence as we know it, would branch out.

What is our position regarding this idea?
We are in the position of the one who is wrecking independence.

Do those among us who, willingly, allowed their rational sites to be violated as they proffer their minds and the fruits of their intellect to the enemy, or as they proffer a bridgehead to the soldiers of the alleged "style"? Do they realize that they are indulging more and more into the destruction of cultural independence?
Had this issue being not as easy as it sounds, would the Materialist-Spiritual Islamist at his best, realise what a slippery slope he is taking by mixing the erroneous bits of this and that in order to present what he thinks of as the correct "methodology"?

The crucial point where the diversion away from the "methodology", as proffered by the Infallible under the title of "balance" that God Almighty wished it to establish justice, is the sight of the unseen in the movement of logics and behaviour.

Among the most obvious features of the Inerrant Text is that the belief in the unseen and the conviction of the afterlife are the origin of the objective reality. Life is nothing but a path and an event in its shadow, and we all must beseech the afterlife in every shade of our living, provided that we do not ignore our shares in life and attain it with modesty.

Why does our belief in the unseen fade and dry out almost to nothing and our conviction of the objective reality thickens into a world of the visible that hurts? We become entangled in life, our vision is blurred, our method is confused and the fog will not clear until we descend into the abyss of the material world as corpses or cadavers and dead bodies with only the rare few having light injuries.

Do we not have at hand and in the "Inerrant Text" the elements that would prevent all that, the elements that we ought to adopt in order to save our selves and our brethrens whom the line of "denial" is doomed to destroy?
Our political independence was lost when our cultural and rational independence weakened, and how illusive it was when we insisted on regaining political independence through ridding ourselves of our cultural independence?
There is no sure way to attaining modernism or to saving nations or countries or to maintaining humankind unless we follow the safe and logical methodology, the prince, and not through enslaving our minds to carnal desires. Any one who falls short of following the right method and persist on relying on others would never succeed in achieving his dreams and would remain a slave of cultural colonialism.

A search into the Inerrant Text for the jurisprudence of cultural independence would show us that the Text provides humankind with sublime methodology, or the unique and logical type of methodology. It would also show how the modernity of such methodology lies in the originality of this miraculous Text whose guidance is larger than everything universal including all imagined forms of modernism.

It all depends on our understanding that the inerrant text message is, foremost, methodological and that it is part of the "invariable" that is not subject to any changes but may respond to them and meet their necessary requirements. It will also present a clear understanding of both productive and sterile experimental methodology in addition to clarifying its specialisation and that it is associated directly only with a limited portion of the objective reality. It would surpass the limits of that portion only if it was possible to control the results that the methodological logic had led to.

The Islamic world is faced with three prevailing types of learning from the Inerrant Text:

1. By dealing with the Text selectively on the account that the Text, at the best of times, is a heritage worthy of our attention but giving priority to international, not Islamic, heritage.
2. By commitment to worship with or without comprehension while maintaining complete separation between the Text and international developments or socio-political movements.
3. By selective commitment to worship where we accept only what we understand and set aside whatever possible of what we do not understand. We push what we do not understand to the furthest corners of our cultural interests awaiting "modernism" and "modern" science to come and reveal, surreptitiously, any hidden signs of greatness that may rest in there.

We are presently called upon to join in with the "original type", not the prevailing one, whose methodological approaches can be summarised as follows:

a. That God Almighty is the source for the Inerrant Text.
b. That any dealing with the Text be based on accepting the originality of the variable and that excluding the constant nullifies its function and demolishes its foundations.
c. That reason is the path to recognize the Infallible where reason does not permit exceeding of his specialities subsequent to proven infallibility and where his opinion is to be cherished just like any other opinion made by a specialist.
d. That the Inerrant Text is the only way to a true modernism, true civilisation and scientific development. The Text is the curriculum for eternity.
e. That all human positive experiments in various fields do corroborate the Inerrant Text which, in turn, supports such endeavours. All efforts towards finding the truth, with all its secrets and treasures, would ultimately lead to the Inerrant Text.
f. That it is the everlasting new and the forever shining with light and guidance. It is alone the ultimate reference to all futuristic projects including modernism in its humane form, and not in any other false forms. To look for whatever modern or new outside the cast of the inerrant light is not dissimilar to searching for new sun and moon. Such a search would be nothing but a striking example of shallowness and futility. It would be no more than searching for modernity outside the world of originality and in the heart of the desert of oddity and estrangement.
g. That it calls upon the specialists to pick up its signals and unfold its scientific codes in all fields of

knowledge, in what is already been discovered and what is, yet, to be discovered. That although its aims are focused upon the jurisprudence of heart and life, its ultimate source is the fountain of all knowledge, "*And He is knower of all things*" [02:29]. The Text addresses humans everywhere, in all the times and with every language. The Inerrant Text was fully aware to provide every prophet with a message befitting the scientific knowledge of his era. Such awareness would never fail the up and coming generations.

This vision can be illustrated further by considering the following two issues:

a. The main topic in the Inerrant Text.
b. Other topics that are closely associated or implicitly linked to the main topic have to be dealt with even indirectly.

Such consideration would not only enrich the style of learning from the Text, it would also aid in straightening its path. The approach emanating from its circumstantial originality would clear many of the metaphysical dimensions that may render it as a vague text that can not be put into any comparison with ordinary or even specialist texts.

It is crucial to observe that the following items are associated with the core of the Inerrant Text:

1. The secrets of existence, nature and creation along with all the rules controlling them.
2. Human entity and its entire links with the Almighty God including all the doctrines of management and administration.

3. Secrets of the unseen from the beginning to the end and whatever lies in between, and that would include turning the page of life and returning to the unseen.
4. Humankind experiment throughout its past, present and future.
5. That the only way to communicate this to all generations would be via a language that takes into account all distinguishing features of human socio-political experiences, with technology as its forefront, and the outcomes of all cultural and rational transformations.

Item number five is the only one, in my belief, that may provoke any controversy.

It all comes to show that the mere existence of the Inerrant Text would provide humankind with a unique way to attain the secrets of existence, the secrets of nature, the secrets of knowledge and values, and to widely open the gates of every modern scientific technology.

It is so simple to recognise that there lies within the reach of humankind scriptural texts covering all aspects of life and provided by the Creator of all things who is the knowledge of all.

It becomes obvious that all efforts to explore the secrets of these texts should be comprehensive and flexible enough to encompass all efforts of invention and discovery.

It is only natural that we always set up specialised committees to investigate any texts or theories offered by a renounced scientist. Should that principal not apply to the Inerrant Text?

When an auditor sets up a blueprint for a futuristic transport system, the design would consider all probable defects and it

would contain many ambiguous or technical terminology that are incomprehensible to many people.
Separating religion away from life lies in the fact that it is a heritage and to avoid dealing with it because of its being a highly sensitive issue, as the shining guidance for humanity, would drop it out of life dynamics and into the heart of solidarity. Its existence should be prominent in all life concerns according to their priorities and significance rather than our own preference.

It is imperative that we do not deject the following two principals:
Firstly that the religious Text is ultimately concerned with true existence and values, not with the search for experimental science except when it interferes with its aims or targets as presented above.
Secondly that the credible and flawless outcomes of experimental sciences do corroborate the Inerrant Text, false or unreliable ones do not. The outcomes, therefore, ought to be checked by the Text and not employed to justify it. It may, however, aid in clarifying some of its clues or enable a better understanding of its meanings in their specialised fields. It should never be accepted that any of it could be the final outcome because human experimentation is still in its infancy stage while the Inerrant Text deals with all the phases including the eternal phase which is the ultimate of what humankind may achieve.
Further clarifications will follow.

III. The Cultural Conviction

As cultural independence is not easily available, we may at least go for cultural conviction. A conviction that implies, to some extent, substituting the prevailing state of "cultural consumerism" with a transitional combination of production and consumption and to a larger extent, the conviction in the ability to attain cultural self satisfaction. It would be the only way to restrain consumption within the cycle of necessity.

A careful look at the international movements of culture reveals not only a close association between the economical and cultural dimensions in the mechanism of the international trade organisation, but also shows that the cultural movement is nothing but a functional department within the trade organisation.

A number of ideologies, such as "the clash of civilisations" or the "end of history" or "globalisation", are on offer in the "rational market" that seem to attract the attentions of rationals from all four corners of the earth and who appear to fall blindly in rhythm with the spirit of "modernism".

Shouldn't we lift our intellect above such meaningless rhetoric and evaluate the new in our cultures by means of weighty criteria?

The call for cultural conviction is not a monopoly of one nation or one people but it is, just like the inerrant text, free to all.

Whoever stakes a scientific foot into the soil of the truth would forever be able to extricate himself out of the consumerism vortex known, falsely, as culture or intellect, and be able to follow reason instead of carnal desires.

The cornerstone here is a rational and perceptive awareness of subjective reality far away from temptations of the "civilisation of desires" or its tricks or its masks or its makeup powders and all traps.

The Inerrant Text, as the lantern of truth, the light of guidance and the source of all knowledge, is the apex at the root of which lie the foundations of this construction and its cornerstone. As any one who distances himself from this unique Text is kindly called upon to get closer, those who are considered as believers ought to get more in line with their faith and translate the demands of their faith into action. All actions that denote any weakness in the cultural conviction, instead of promoting or supporting it, would be nothing but worthless efforts. There would be no conviction in the Inerrant Text while all our efforts are wasted looking for modernism outside its boundaries.

There would be no conviction as long as we allow every cycle of time to drop one of its components under the disguise of calling it circumstantial and calling us modernists. Such an attitude would take away all but the form of religion and the name of Islam.

There would be no conviction as long as we wish it to fall in line with the spirit of time, unless we mean it as a "fair offer" and then we would demand to improve such offer by giving it a more appropriate name. Cultural conviction is when we set our starting point out of a solid and flexible rational vision that would allow the transformed sectional age to associate with our culture in a credible fashion.

But to build our rational foundations on the whims of the "variable" under the illusion that development, or reality,

required it would only infer that we are adopting seasonal intellect and culture of consumerism.

There lies the ultimate intellect with all its glories, real or imaginary. Do we notice any aberration in such intellect to the core of the inerrant text? Or does it nestle back into its orbit to launch itself towards even the smallest application in its experimental fields?
A conviction such as this supported by evidence and corroborated by proofs is what essentially required.

The progressive human need for a solid rational refuge is a vital need out of which other needs, including social justice, branch out and can not be achieved in isolation of a sound rational vision. Human history has never known any thing like the inerrant text to provide it with a means of communication that could lead to such treasures of truth and within the reach of humankind.
Despite such uniqueness and scientific superiority of the text, we humans find ourselves at numerous occasions adopting the modern position of looking down on it and decide what should be suitable for our age, to bring about what we think as fit to breathe and to bury alive whatever our virile desire, in its control of the international cultural movement, does not like.
It is imperative in our cultural conviction, to realise that all the scientists in the various aspects of the inerrant text have dealt with it from the disposition of a young scholar towards his masters. And that is due to nothing but the fact that the text is the word of the All-Knowing, All-Wise. Also due to that "*and of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little*" [17:85]. Anyone standing on the cusp of all knowledge ought

to seek the cultural conviction which will open up the gates of all available learning. To behave like an arrogant imbecile and barge into the court brandishing an “electronic” toy that he sees as the highest scientific development or the best modernity can offer, is a clear indication to how far whatever little knowledge he possessed had misled him in his quest to gain any scientific development.

Is the inerrant text larger than all of us, larger than all mankind, larger than all the ages? Is it possible to reach the true meanings of life by listening to it? Would any all forms of modernism diminish in front of it? Is the difference between it and all other texts like the difference between a creature and its creator? Is the only condition to deal with the text its steadfastness and the lack of any solid evidence of its “circumstantialities”?

The positive answers to all these questions would provide the full attainment of “cultural conviction”. Such an attainment will grow and flourish through various phases of developmental knowledge and experimentation as had shown to us in the history of many generations.
Cultural conviction provides the perfect site to monitor all hybrid attempts in the style, in the way of thinking, in the use of culture to serve a royal court, and all other means of cheap earning. It also facilitates a distinction between the culture of mind and the culture of desire, the selfish employment of culture instead of using it as a means of refinement, the conversion of science into a “certificate” or a mere item for sale, and all forms of cultural robbery that forfeit all for the sake of looking modern or attaining machination.

Cultural conviction would expose the "electivity" that separates any knowledge seeker from its environment and saws the seeds of disunity between them in order to set up some foundations for the other cultural project to establish a rooting system that would ensure a rewarding futuristic crop.

IV. His People Abandoned Him

The phenomenon of the estrangement of the "Inerrant Text" can be seen through the following four spectra:

1. The estrangement of its monotheism vision towards the philosophy of existence.
2. The estrangement of its knowledge of the human nature with its links to the Almighty God or its social links.
3. The estrangement of all the secrets of natural history that it contains, especially in the fields of biology.
4. The estrangement of all the clues and formulae in the fields of technical development.

It is probably best to describe the estrangement of the text in terms of how the infallible described the estrangement of one prophet by referring to him as the one "abandoned by his own people"[1], which is far more eloquent than saying "scientist amongst commoners"[2].

Whoever uses such a term may easily be the worst of the commoners or the first of the lost ones as it bears neither an

[1] That was referred to the prophet (Pbuh & hf) about prophet Khaled Bin Sinan, see Al Kaleeni, Alkafi part 8/342, and al Sudooq, Kamal Al Deen and Tamam Al Ne'emah pp 659 where it says: Khaled Bin Sinan Al Absy is a prophet who would not be denied or be claimed as the news shows whether in public or privately. His daughter followed the Prophet (pbuh & hf) and he said to her: This is the daughter of a prophet, Khaled Bin Sinan Al Absy, whose people abandoned him. See also Ibn Sa'ad, Al Tabaqat Al Kobra vol1/169, and Ibn Al Atheer, Asad Al Ghabah, vol2/84 ; Nabiyun Dhayya'ahu Qawmuh.

[2] Al Sheikh Al Suddooq, AlKhisal, pp142, "three people complaining to God The supreme: a ruined mosque no body attends, a scientist amongst commoners and a copy of the Quran hung dustily and nobody reads it".

acquittal nor an accusation. It doesn't, also, infer any particular accusation. It is more of a comprehensive description attempting to mar the reputation of great scholars who devoted their lives in studying the inerrant text. They brought about beacons of light that would illuminate the here and the after, and whose devotion had been rewarded with nothing but the loss of their enlightenment amongst the waves of ignorance and abandonment.

The tragic irony of the religious text is that it is like a "scientist amongst commoners", "a prophet abandoned by his people". We understood only a small portion of what the text had told us as it had no choice but to tell and to address the commoner to lift him up willingly out of the world of ignorance.

The Text is never imposed upon anyone, as in "*can we compel you to accept it when ye are averse thereto?*" [11:28], nor will it be able to change its form to accommodate any ones' ignorance. All it would do is to choose the appropriate means and hopes for the best.

The prophet or the scholar can preach the true facts away from tales or legends and in the most appropriate styles in the hope of bringing back the astray and making the obstinate reconsider, "*Await then! Lo! We are awaiting with you*" [09:52].

It may take up to more than few centuries for a fact to be established, but the most important thing is that the true facts remain within the human reach and nobody can make the accusation of the lack of evidence "*in order that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the messengers*" [04:165].

The issue of resurrection has always been the cornerstone of the religious text where a lot of evidence is presented in its support. This clear fact remains, however, a controversial topic subject to ridicule and an excuse for those who never believed in it.

It is quite odd that such a controversy persist to the present day at the age of human cloning! Is that not an indication of our tragic misunderstanding of the inerrant text?

To reproduce a human being out of a gene is accepted as a sublime and unique event but it seems that the resurrection of a human by his creator "*and it is easier for Him*" [30:27] is a matter of incredulous regression.

Is this degradation what we are supposed to accept as a civilised logic??

As long as it is allowed to abandon a prophet, it would not be odd to abandon his Text.

As long as it is accepted to abandon the Quran, abandoning the mosques and the world will only be a mere consequence.

The sharpest of all abandonment is certainly that arising from ignorance associated with ridicule and feeling of superiority.

And that is the tragic situation of the Inerrant Text, or should that be our tragic situation of not being grateful to the blessings of that Text?

All will become clear if we take into account the following two issues:

1. That all the efforts of the infallibles and of those who followed their path towards the truth are within our reach in the inerrant text.
2. That our position amongst the world nations- if we have any- is right on the margins and, yet, we march

> on in our irresponsible subordination and unrewarding indebtedness to others.

Are we going to make up our minds and put an end to our estrangement of the Text?
Are we about to realise that the way we learn from it would transform the face of the earth by means of reason, common sense and guidance?
Are we about to attain that the simplest of the Text verses represent the utmost of humankind's aspirations or endeavours? And that within the text lay clear and numerous clues to technological advancement, albeit not its main concern?

The first estrangement that bore the responsibility of demonstrating the monotheism vision for existence and the universe has been discussed in numerous publications. It is the origin from which all other forms of estrangements branched out.
It is the true foundations of all visions. No vision would survive the slightest deviation from its path let alone being so clearly distant into the furthest corners of East or West.
What treasure the Text contains is beyond anything the human mind may reach via any other routes although it is eternity that is the ultimate target.
Imam Khomeini said "Anyone who ventured into the forms of pre & post- Islamic philosophies, especially those in the recent centuries, and attempted to compare the scholars in those two eras (including in India and other regions), would realise how much progress the post- Islamic scholars had

achieved even though they themselves were only beginners in their exploration of the facts in the Quran."[1]
We consolidated the grip of this estrangement when we chose to exclude the concept of absolute philosophy out of our circle of interests. We labelled absolute knowledge as nothing more than a form of Sufism or deviation without bothering to consider any "scientific research" liability.

The discussions about the second estrangement seem to include the process of comparing the literature of reference to the Almighty God in all religions to that in the inerrant text. It also includes a comparison between Positive laws and Islamic laws.
Such discussions show a wide gap between the inerrant text and other texts that is not dissimilar to the gap between a creative industrial inventor and an ignorant parasitic consumer.

We obviously have failed to present the scientific treasures accumulated by our scientists in the appropriate manner that would place them in their legitimate status.

It has become so strange to discuss the third and fourth spectra of estrangements that we have to point out the following explanations:
One, to consider the idea that the Quran being the "*exposition of all things*" [16:89], would leave the door ajar to the concept that the inerrant text may contain all sciences, as said by some, or open it widely, as said by others. It is possible

[1] Imam Khomeini, Saheefat Noor, vol 17/430, part of a speech at Hussaineyat Jamaran commemorating the commencement of the Prophet's mission.

that a mathematical equation proposed quietly may represent a revolution in the world of physics, medicine or technology. Why then do we not accept the obvious connotation of the Quran being the "interpretation" to everything? And does the wonderment become the most formidable obstruction in its way?

On looking at the supporting narratives, it becomes clear that this vision in its entirety is powerful enough to withstand any opposing vision. It relies on the substantive and clearly exposes the contradictions in the stance of the "substantiaters" who stick blindly to the letter of the word. It also relies on a wide range of Islamic narratives regarding ways of dealing with its content.[1]

[1] Ref. to God's words: "*an exposition of all things*" [16:89] and "*We have neglected nothing in the Book*" [06:38]. Two opinions: The first which is the prevalent one is that generalisation includes all 'Shari'ah' as the subject of the Book. The second is that there is no evidence for such restrictions specially with all the stories about " knowing what there was and what there will be till Dooms Day", and about the capacity of "Science of the Book" instead of "Sciences from the Book" as mentioned by AlFaydh Al Kashani, Tafseer Al Safi,vol1/57. Also Al Qortobi in Tafseer Al Ayah, and Sayyed Tabtaba'i who said, referring to God's good names, vol 6/254: if we learned the science of names, their linkages with matters, and what God's names mean whether singly or in plural, we would learn about the universe, its laws and all that occurs within it one by one. And that was how he interpreted God's words: "*an exposition of all things*", vol 12/324: there are clues within the narratives that the Quran does include the knowledge of what there was and what there will be till Dooms Day. And if these narratives are correct, it would have been more appropriate to use the linguistic generalisation instead. May be there are clues outside the linguistic denotations that would reveal secrets beyond the human comprehension. Al Siyouti referred, in Al Dorr Al Manthoor vol.4/127, to what Ibn Masood said about the Quran: "the knowledge of those of old and those of later time". The same was also mentioned by Al Shawkani, Fat'h Al Qadeer vol. 3/189 in the Prophetic Hadith: "The Book

Two, anyone who disagrees with the above cannot deny that the inerrant text is full of clues and connotations about nature, biology and various discoveries in the technological world.
There are two reasons for this:
The **first** one is that when God talks about His creations and about what goes on in heavens and on earth, about the solar and lunar movements, about thunder and lightening, about clouds and winds, about the rain and plants, about life and matter and how all that is set for the benefit of mankind, it becomes clear that His word would include scientific clues that are found nowhere else. And that would surely place Him as the source of all knowledge for any objective researcher.

The **second** one is that the universality of Islam makes it possible to discuss all other topics and new discoveries. It is only natural, therefore, to find within the inerrant text and after all those thousands of years all the clues of the latest achievements of mankind in all fields even those far from the text speciality.

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of God has the news on events of old and of later time", and "scholars never have enough in referring to the book or can do without nor its wonders ever expire". It was also directed by Al Turmothi who took it from Al Kordi, Tareekh Al Quran Al Kareem, pp12. Narratives about Ahlulbayt (as) and extracting all knowledge from the Quran would not contradict interpretation of the ayah in its full implications. See, for example, AlMahasin, AlBorqi,vol.1/267 where it quotes Imam Al Sadeq (as): "No affair disputed between two but has a reference in the Book of God. However, never attained by minds of men". See, also: Al Tabari, "Dala'el Al Imamah", pp 235, and Al Majlissi, "Bihar Al Anwar", vol. 62/64 and 194. Many narrative references are filled with clues spread throughout many chapters.

We are mistaken when we make any claim without proof or scientific evidence and when we take it as an origin that denote a familiar “modernism”.
We are further mistaken when we try to prove “religion” by means of scientific theories or suppositions or probabilities. We would be correct, however, when we consider the most obvious of all that as indicator to the necessity of placing the text in its natural position as a mine of all knowledge where all human aspirations can be achieved with the help of the inerrant text that also accumulates more of what is unattainable by humans. Whether such accumulation is an absolute interpretation of all issues or just an interpretation of the text speciality is a matter for discussion. The first is the most likely option.
It is worthwhile to notice how difficult it is to demonstrate that a project for the whole future, including the Afterlife, would have nothing to do with scientific progress in all fields. It fits well with the estrangement of the text and that it is a heritage to humankind. It is on such a basis that the difficulty of proving what I am about to say becomes clear.
Any agreement with all the invariables can be achieved only through new and fresh attitude towards the text, an attitude accepting the text as a unique, proficient, and wholly perfect. An attitude without which there shall be no point in referring to the completion of religion.
The inerrant text is the “divine architectural design” for the human self- whether singular or plural- and all its interactions with the realities of life and its consequential events on this world of ours. Would it not be odd that while we do not respect any design for a house, let alone a city, that doesn’t take into account all its probable variations, we come to doubt that a design for all that is to be as demonstrated in the

inerrant text, "*Should He not know what He created? And He is the Subtile, the Aware*" [67:14], to be less than perfect.

The talk in our modern day and time is all about the great discovery of the human genome and how difficult it is to unfold its mysteries. What we should direct our efforts towards is the search for a more significant genome; the genome of human psyche, the genome of the group, the genome of existence and nature which are all present within the text of God Almighty, the perfect inventor and designer. We ought not limit our search to the uncertainties of the product or the presumptions of the consumer. What ought to be fully noticed is the fact that humankind shall carry on in its march, willingly or otherwise, towards meeting its destiny as mentioned in the inerrant text. All human discoveries will always be within such a concurrence. Humankind, in this sense, goes through a path not so dissimilar to that of an individual whose eventual return to the truth becomes easier and more attainable the longer he survives and the more mature he becomes.

Any one who strays for long will forever yearn to return home. His painful suffering will always overwhelm all aspects of his life. Based on this I find myself on the cusp of presenting further explanations for the second and fourth spectra of estrangement.

With regard to the second spectrum, it should be emphasised that the inerrant text did refer to human rational achievements, whether truly followed or not, and did state its eventuality.

A distinguishing feature of the contemporary age, besides all its negativities, is the unprecedented interaction with so many aspects and concepts of life, such as:
1. The value of knowledge.
2. Human rights.
3. Liberation.
4. The law.
5. and lastly, Globalisation.

What I am referring to here is the abundant reference to these concepts and the persistent interaction with them throughout the four corners of our earth.
I exclude here any righteous approach of those concepts or any righteous comparisons associated with them. In addition, I exclude the prevailing attitude of employing these concepts as a smoke screen to a new bloodier and more ferocious imperial hegemony that is taking place nowadays and after the events of 9/11.
A close look at all the above titles reveals that all are included as conceptual bases rooted deeply in the inerrant text since the days of the first prophet. They are the backbone to its futuristic project to establish the one and just international government.

Let us consider the following scripts:
1. With reference to the perfection of human knowledge, Imam al-Sadeq (as) says:

   a. Science comprises twenty seven volumes. All that was revealed by the prophets and became known to us makes up two volumes. On the rising day of Al-Qaem (aj) the

twenty five volumes[1] will be added to the other two and distributed as twenty seven among the people.

b. When Al-Qaem (aj) rises, God will place his hand over his subjects' heads to complete their minds and fulfil their dreams.[2]

As for the value of knowledge, its mere presence in the inerrant text at all phases of pre and post-creation and by the hands of every infallible, would leave us in no doubts that humankind would not have recognised the values of knowledge without the teachings of the infallibles.

2. With reference to human or absolute rights which are the centre of the religious text and the international statehood which will be achieved by Imam al-Mahdi (aj), there are the following connotations:

a. He will follow the path of God's messenger (Pbuh & hf), urges all to be truthful and supports the meek to be truthful.[3]

b. Among his many titles the Imam Mahdi (aj) is known as the Imam of truth[4], the Caller of the truth[5] and the Pillar of the truth[6]. His state was also called the State of the Truth.[7]

c. The following script was noted in one of his visitation greetings (*ziyarah*): May God revive the Quran with His [commissioned] patron and reveal its eternal light, inspire our dead hearts, cure our ailing chests, unite us with all

[1] Al Majlessi, "Al Bihar", vol. 52/336
[2] Al Kaleeni, "Al Kafi",1/25
[3] Ibn Arabi, " Al Fotoohat Al Makiyyah"/327
[4] Al Sheikh Al Mofeed, "Al Irshad"/360
[5] Ibn Shahr Ashob, "Maqatil Al Talibeen" 43
[6] Kifayat Al Ather 213
[7] Kifayat Al Ather 213

astray notions, raise all neglected limitations and all forgotten laws until all truth be known and all justice bloom[1].

d. Imam al-Askari (as) says to Imam Mahdi (aj): It is with you that all corners of the earth are pleased, the branches of glory bloom and the pillars of truth are set and the deviants crawl back into their nests[2].

3. As with justice and liberation which is actually the centre of human rights, the text is full of references to a world of justice and fairness replacing that of tyranny and oppression. The term "filling the universe" is used in numerous resources.

A number of scripts may be cited here as follows:

a. He treats all equally until there is no needy anywhere.[3]

b. A caller from heaven says: God has protected all you humans from the tyrants, from the hypocrites and their associates[4].

c. He sets up the law of justice so no one will terrorise another[5].

d. He provides equally and rules justly[6].

4. And as with the law, it is said that "He will reveal the Old Testament along with all the other divine and original books in a cave in Antakiya, that believers in the Torah will be judged by their Torah, believers of the Bible shall be judged

[1] Misbah Al Za'er 312, and Al Bihar 102/83.
[2] Al Sadooq, "Kamal Al Deen"445.
[3] Al Majlissi, "Al Bihar" 52/390.
[4] Malahem Ibn Tawoos/145.
[5] Al Majlissi, "Al Bihar" 52/194.
[6] Al Noumani, "Al Ghaybah", 237.

by their Bible and believers in the Quran shall be judged by their Quran[1].

There is no controversy here about the Quran being the ultimate doctrine. All divine books come from the same origin and they do not contradict one another; the former of them refers to the latter and the latter complements the former. It is crucial that followers of these books do observe what is said in their books about complying with the Quran.
The position of law in the inerrant text is the "boundaries of God Almighty". It forms its pivotal concept since the origin of life, as illustrated by the narratives of the infallibles in chapter two. It is imperative here to affirm the future inevitability of attaining an authority of just laws.

5. As for globalisation, real and not alleged, we can recite the following:
a. The day of victory will be when God opens the universe for al-Mahdi [Qaem] (aj)[2].
b. He owns it all, from its most eastern to its most western[3].
c. When the affairs come in the grasp of Imam Mahdi (aj), God eases all that is difficult and smoothes all that is rough. He makes it all within the palms of the Imam's hands. How can one not see a hair in own palm?[4].

The Islamic view of globalisation is that it represents the future of mankind, a future of complete cycle of knowledge,

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[1] Ibid.
[2] Al Mahajjah, 174.
[3] Kamal Al Deen, 2/417.
[4] Ithbat Al Hudaat 494/495. Note that all the above-mentioned texts are taken from Maa'jam Imam Mahdi's (aj) reference book.

a future of justice and fairness to all, a future of one law and a future of one global village emanating from the concept of one global family, "*We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another*" [49:14].
Globalisation is a concept rich with human love and sincerity, a topic that refutes selfishness or hegemony and rises above the concept of profit or economical gains, a concept that embodies the virtues of family life. It doesn't deny material gains but preserves the rights of every individual.

Is it not time that we recognise the distinguished universal dimension present in all the original texts of all Devine religions?
How odd it is to find an individual who does recognise within the inerrant text the distinguished site of pilgrimage with all its rules, and yet fails to recognise the "one family" concept proffered by the text where the concept on globalisation would appear as a different topic in comparison.
The Islamic call is limitless and it is not less formidable to invite everybody to join and participate in an international gathering, albeit once in a lifetime, to enter the "first house" or yet "*the* house" where he would feel at home and conduct a prayer that can never be perfected anywhere else but at *the* homeland[1].
Some of the pilgrimage rituals represent a practical dedication and operational exercise of the concept of one international family in a way that would enhance it, especially at the time of realising the "one global state", a state that the first stop towards it may start at the "holy

[1] According to the rules of jurisprudence (Fiqh) of Ahululbayt (as).

house" which God offered for "the people" as a secure refuge and a gathering point to all descendants of Adam & Eve.
Is it not time to discover the universality of Islam through the pilgrimage, for instance, whose sole principle is nothing less than inimitable?
Many Islamic facts do embody such a dimension with all its far-reaching denotations of mankind advancement to the extent where the above-mentioned titles would make up the solid foundations for earth and its pillars.
The increased arguments about those five titles and all the human interests in it, in spite of all the negativities, are the painful stresses of formulating the future programme of Islam.

The aim of our stopping at the threshold of the fourth estrangement is to explore some clues in the inerrant text that would pronounce all the distinguishing features of technological progress, i.e., exploring the core of globalisation. And I am referring here to the revolutionary development in the world of information technology and its core of "Information" loads.
There are few observations to be considered here:

1- How are we to interpret the aforementioned Hadith, article (c) about globalisation, which states that: "until the universe becomes as plain as the palm of his hand"?
There is, clearly, no advantage to limiting the interpretation of all this by means of metaphysical elements especially when we come across narratives like: "whatever he says in the east can be heard in the west" or "a pillar of light" through which the Imam can see whatever he wishes, and more of the same.

2- Or how do we explain the reference to something akin to an advanced space ship in the Hadith of Al-Buraq? It clearly means that the "reins" mentioned in the Hadith represent "all methods of motion control" including, humbly, the "electronic keys".

3- And how do we explain the Hadith that describes Mohammad's ascension to heaven about a window of light through which the angel of death could see all there is that God Almighty allows to be seen "like a coin flipping in one's hand".

4- Had there been no clues to the human covenants that God has entrusted within the "black stone", whatever is mentioned in the Hadith would be more than enough.

5- Would it not be possible that what the Hadith refers to as God Almighty "depositing the people's covenant in the black stone" also include the "accumulative knowledge" which is just a customary term of deposition? We should, also, be aware that the inerrant text did include reference to what could only be explained, nowadays, by means of "information loads" as illustrated in the following Hadith:
"Amir al-Momineen [Imam Ali] (as) said: God be He blessed and praised, created the spirits two thousand years prior to the bodies. And when He joined the two together, He marked the foreheads with the words of either believer or atheist indicating their afflictions and their good or bad deeds in equivalence to the ears of a little mouse. He then revealed the Quran to His prophet: "*Lo! therein verily are portents for those who read the signs*" [15:75], the prophet (Pbuh & hf)

was the ‘reader of signs’ and after him will be myself and all my descendant Imams.[1]”

This doesn’t imply to curtail the denotations of the inerrant text within the limits of what humankind had achieved scientifically as what is still to come may even be greater. What it implies is rather a conviction that the inerrant text is far more wholly and comprehensive than whatever knowledge humankind may ever learn. Such a belief is no more than a basic prerequisite to the conviction that the inerrant text comes from the ‘All-Knower, All-Wise’.

It is the only path to the appropriate dealing with the inerrant text in accordance with “cultural independence” and “cultural conviction”. It is “the project for the future and eternity”.

It must be emphasised, once more, that what has been said so far is nothing more than a glimpse at the clues of the inerrant text before future humankind reaches the summit of its knowledge. The aim is not to accredit the leadership of this revolution to us Muslims but rather to dispel any alleged contradictions between Islam and other modes of civilisation. And to affirm that the adoption of Islam by any nation is a key element to that nation’s progress in all fields of knowledge, including information science, and to the realisation that Islam would always enhance and encourage such progress.

It is quite tragic to find people falling under the illusion of false liberalism they think would allow them the freedom of calling anything that doesn’t suit their own ideologies, or their embittered desires, as regressive or primitive. They seem to be bent on forcing the inerrant text within the

[1] Al-Majlessi, Bihar al-Anwar, vol.14/290 and vol.85/132, al-Bahrani and S.Hashim, “Yanabi’a al Ma’ajiz”, pp86.

constrictions of circumstance hoping to please those who were in denial of the true value of the text in the first place. The tragedy of denying the religious text did befall many people before. Their efforts against the text succeeded in invoking more and more enemies whose sole aims were to belittle and denigrate the inerrant text.

Such an extremely odd ideology can be either wrong or entirely right to an extent that is beyond any comprehension. To deal with it under such circumstances we have to get out of the norm and to conduct a scientific research entirely void of any bias or any restrictive pre-determined knowledge. This is exactly what all scientific researches that transformed the face of the earth are supposed to be. Why do we, then, shut the door of scientific research when we deal with the assumptions of the inerrant text while we are fully aware that such assumptions do infer the utmost meanings of the previous options? The search for the truth should never, from an Islamic point of view, be alarmed by any casting light; for there may always be a more scholarly than a scholar. The religious truth is something universal free to all and subject to all. It may, even, be enriched by the experiences of those who fight it or it may be marred by the efforts of those who uphold it. The outcomes are always to be upheld. Religious truth is larger than decades of time or centuries of time.

It is imperatively important here to state that any scientific or technological progress can be a candidate to participate in the wholly process of formulating the religious truth and opening the human minds to its unlimited horizons.
It all depends on how far we are ready to go in finding the right position for such a progress; the position that is based

on a balanced dealing with the inerrant text as the source of all the secrets of the truth. And treating any scientific discovery with whatever is appropriate for its position towards that truth without being dazzled by it or being afraid of approaching it with a closed mind.

We can end the estrangement of the inerrant text in our midst by engaging it with absolute conviction that is larger than life and above all that is known to humankind, that it is wider than everything modern and that it is the scheme of eternity. The cycle of the universe, in comparison, is no more than a dark night that would drag its tail in defeat when the morning sunshine appears over the horizon. Is not the morning nigh?

V. Sufism and Sublime Knowledge (Irfan)

Whenever we find ourselves picking an item at the market of International Culture and indulging aimlessly in its selective compliance, we call it Cultural Openness.

How do we, then, justify the haphazard employment of the Cultural Openness itself?

Does this openness mean the link to anything that is only an outsider?

Or is it a reference to all cultural aspects wherever they occur?

Are there any priorities in this openness?

Would one of its priorities be that the stories of 'Rocambole' or those of 'Arsène Lupin' are appreciated more than the writings of Sahrawardi or Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen?

Would not that be an extremely erroneous employment and a pervert application for the commodity of "Cultural Openness"?

Is not that, in reality, anything but a close-mindedness or fossilisation and desertification in the guise of modernity?

Anyone who sees as his duty to "curse" Sufism and Sublime Knowledge ('Irfan) may do that while reading its outcomes or at least open his mind to it. Have we not, always, urged everyone to read the publications of the atheists or those of the infidels and the insane bearing in mind that the "Text"[1]

[1] There are many excerpts about the Prophet (Pbuh & hf) and Ahlulbayt (as) with regard to seeking knowledge even in China or to wisdom being the aims for all believers, and as in some excerpts, 'wherever it was, even out of the mouths of the hypocrites', (Ali Bin Mohammad Al Laithi Al Wasiti, "Oyoun Al Hikam wal Maw'edth, pp22). The expression "even out of the mouths of the Insane" was referred to by Al Majlessi (Al Bihar), vol.79/84 as a word of wisdom. Sheikh Al Toosi quoted Imam Ali (as) as saying, in his "Amali": "Wisdom is the believer's long-pursued

itself ascertains the cultural openness that we adopted as a free choice?
And what is the reason for such a ferocious animosity to anything nearing Sufism or Sublime Knowledge (‘Irfan)?
Is it related to the understanding that Sufis and many Orafa’a* being usually associated with the concepts of hallucination or deviation?
Or is it due to the cultural “Ego” that tends to distance itself from any accusations whether they are confirmed or not and whether they are truthful or not?
Or is it the modern “Ego” that became so modern that it allowed those who never learned the concept of “Rationale” to feel sorry for Aristotle or the Rationale of Image and to scorn those who are yet to depart from the zone of the primitive? And did it also allow the one who realised the truth about the Hallaj affairs to equate him with Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen. What I am determined to do here is to defend the spiritual stock within the inerrant text –which is the foundation in every dimension- and not to defend Sufism or the Orafa’a.

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objective. Seek it even if held by an atheist and you become more entitled to it and its holders.” Ibn Abi Al Hadeed also quoted Imam Ali (as) to say in “Nahj Al Balaghah”: “take wisdom whomever it comes from. It trembles in the heart of a hypocrite until it leaves and settles in the heart of whomever it belongs to”. Al Halwani narrated the same in his book “Nozhatul Naather Wa Tanbeehul Khater” pp42 but with a slightly different format: “take wisdom whomever it comes from. It trembles in the heart of a hypocrite until it leaves and settles in the heart of believers to whom it belongs to”. It should be noticed that what was mentioned in the book “Nahj Al Balaghah”, Ibn Qutaibah’s elucidation, supports the second version.

* Orafa’a: Those claiming reach of sublime knowledge by referring to cognitive meanings.

That stock seemed to have been lost in our world that is overrun by materialism to the extent that all thoughts have been reformed and rendered too feeble to venture into any meaningful horizon or sublime spirit.
That would not have been possible had not the spiritual dimension in the Muslims been weakened.
Such an excessive weakness would not be possible without an appropriate entry. And there is nothing more effective than the hallucination of Sufism and the deviation of the Orafa'a to provide such an entry.
It becomes clear that the felony of Sufism & Sublime Knowledge ('Irfan) allegations is highly ranked amongst the elements of Islamic "materialism" just as it was with the role played by deviations within the Christian church that led to the current materialism throughout the world.
It was not within the capabilities of the Phenominists to achieve their aims in fighting the spiritual stock within the inerrant text had it not been for such a fertile material that fell into their hands to be used for their unfortified sweeping generalisation.
Such an erroneous generalisation is based on the following three aspects:
One: the consideration of anyone who wishes to delve into linguistic connotations as a Sufi.
Two: the consideration that the allegations of most (Orafa'a) equate Sufism with Sublime Knowledge ('Irfan) without realising the features that distinguish cognition (Irfan) from the (Orafa'a) or the differences between many types of (Irfan) and the one right type.
Three: suppose we accept that (Orafa'a) and (Irfan) are the same as Sufism and their deviations, what is there to justify any practical detachment from the spiritual Islamic core

which could never have reached such an acclaimed status without theoretical disposition?

Talking about the dangers of Sufis allegations, Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen says: “their speech may fall under the description of calamities which is meant to divert the language of Islamic law away from its clear signs onto the incomprehensible mysticism. This is logically and lawfully forbidden because when words of law are diverted away from their real signs without any infallible justification from the law lord or without any logical need; there will be no trust in such words. This would clearly imply that any needless diversion for any wording of Islamic laws would render the words of God and His Prophet (Pbuh & hf) no more than useless uttering. Mysticism can never be manageable and will always be a controversial concept open to contradictory interpretations or variable interactions. This is one sure harmful feature of Sufism and its popular allegations. It is with such a deviant way that mysticism managed to destroy the whole of Islamic law by diverting and recasting its phenomenal signs to fit their own line of thought. We have to be fully alert not to be taken by their shiny-looking dressings. Their wickedness is far more dangerous than the wickedness of the devils themselves. It is through them that the devils intend to take the religion out of the Muslims hearts”[1]

[1] Al Sheerazi,, “Sadrul Mota’alliheen” destroyed the idols of the Ignorance era in replying to the Sufism, as in Al Qimmi’s book “Safeenat ul Bihar”, article “Souf” vol.2/60 with minimum change. (old print, Darul Murtadha, Beirut, published Al Wafa’a est.)

Imam Khomeini says: “True cognition is rarely found in this world”.[1]

“The (Orafa’a) did originally believe in Islam but they tended to refer all issues back to cognitive interpretations (Irfanic meanings) without taking into account any contemporary aspects. If they heard a narrative, for example, about holy war they would call it self struggle. They considered Islam as nothing so comprehensive and so wholly as it truly is […]. We were afflicted by them for a while. And of course they were good people but they only saw one-sided image of Islam and viewed it as one dimensional concept. We seem to have been afflicted recently with another type of people who are on the opposite side of Sufism and they tend to attribute every thing to materialism”[2].

The history of Sufism and (Irfan) provides ample support for the views mentioned above by two well renowned scholars in that field.

It is important, therefore, to defend the origin of (Irfan) as an entity away from most of its applications without any concern for defending Sufism or most of the (Orafa’a). The aim would be to defend the spiritual values and not the term (Irfan). There will be no objection to anyone adopting the subjective values of (Irfan) but rejecting the term (Irfan) as such.

Irfan with an objective view

This point may be dealt with along with the following two considerations: linguistic or conventional meanings.

[1] Sahifat Nur, vol. 20/494.
[2] Op. cit, vol. 10/459.

In case of the linguistic approach one has to look for the exact meaning of (Irfan) through a conglomeration of absolute knowledge that shapes the human beings and the knowledge that enables him to achieve his targets. In doing so one has to overcome numerous obstacles preventing any objective dealing with the (Irfan):

Firstly: avoiding any separation between knowledge and the knowledgeable that led to the insertion of the machine into the core of knowledge as an outcome for the collapse of the industrial revolution and the information revolution later on. Such a situation rendered any talk about pure knowledge that is free from all mechanical contaminations or technical seduction no more than mere heritage.

Secondly: to maintain that the terms knowledge and (Irfan) mean two different things. The first is concerned with the pure meaning while the second refers to a combined state of knowledge and its embodiments in the world of behaviour and mannerism. And that is why the term in its Arabic form required the additional letters of A and N, as shown in the Arabic lingual textbooks or books about the usage of "analogous vocabulary" such as "hayran or thama'an" etc.

Thirdly: rejecting all earlier attitudes and subtractions formulating our sense of apprehension towards the linguistic meaning of (Irfan) based on how people looked at it in the past or on their negativity towards it.

If we manage to go past all these obstacles we will find ourselves facing the fact that the term (Irfan) in its exact linguistic meaning (knowledge + embodiment) would provide the only way to human formulation.

To summarise we can say that knowledge as a value requires the presence of a knowledgeable whose knowledge is not complete without his compliance to what he knew. And that would depend on the effective feature of his mannerism and conduct regardless to the actual nature of his type of knowledge or his mannerism.
This equation is what we call (Irfan) without any additional adjectives whether Islamic or otherwise. Such vision of knowledge is entirely different from the adopted identity of knowledge. Whatever type of knowledge we adopt we should always acknowledge the structural reality which reveals- in facing mannerism and behaviour as the two sides of the current human crisis- that (Irfan), regardless to its content, is a subject for modernity and the future. It is not a fading vocabulary of tradition or a mere expression to be apprehensive about.

The second consideration in talking about (Irfan) is related to (Irfan) in Islam.
The obstacles standing between us and Islamic (Irfan) are more formidable than the ones we talked about so far. They even exceed the limits of comparison.
But we may be able to encompass them all if we managed to refrain from any shallowness of thought and adopted the spirit of scientific precision, no matter how hard that might be, instead of wallowing in a wave of accusations that fails to realise the difference between the principle and its phenomenal outlooks. The accusations that not only surpassed the ability to distinguish between Sufism and (Irfan), but went as far as considering (Irfan) as nothing more than primal ignorance and fictional mix up.

The level of animosity towards such an acclaimed achievement in the field of science and labour is quite puzzling to any objective learner. This animosity must have caused great losses to socio-political studies throughout the last centuries.
Sufism represents an unclaimed space at the steps of (Irfan) and right on the edges of what is being safely retained of its deviations. This space has to be surpassed in order to reach the (Irfan) summit. Despite all that, history has shown many a declarations being made by numerous renowned scholars and philosophers who considered Sufism to represent the highest achievements of human mind and the nearest ever to our senses and emotions. Sufism to them is the ultimate in human endeavours and the jurisprudence of the heart[1].

Objections to (Irfan) may stem from an illusion that it is nothing but mere interpretation outside all the accepted rules and measurements. To all its enemies who are armed with a strong drive to protect truth and style, Sufism is just another form of deviation.
Such an illusive understanding would clearly justify everything those enemies may say about Sufism but it would also render them lacking in making any sound judgement about it. They will be at great loss if time proved them wrong.
This is exactly where battles take place and challenges are confronted and none of the combatants, followers of Irfan or its foes, can afford my position as an outsider. They have no choice but to watch the battle in order to maintain their own

[1] Refer to Henry Korean about Islam in Iran, translated by Mr. Nawaf Al Mosawi.

impressions that would ultimately lead them to the rewarding victory.
It is with such a humble scientific spirit that reason takes off the shoes of shallow arrogance and takes up - humbly- the position of learning from the specialized experts.

Narratives of many specialists bear evidence to the following invariables:
A– Word connotation is fundamental.
B– Harmony of mind and law is complete.
C– The scientific style of seeing and exploring is the one to adopt.
D– The negative attitude towards Irfan is due not only to it being generally considered as a mix up or augury, but to it being more of a specialised rational ideology formatted in impregnable text making it attainable only by those who possess the appropriate tools.

It is worthwhile to note that the efforts to corroborate these invariables may become so comprehensive to the extent that almost all the renowned ideologies share in such efforts.
What is more worthy of note is the position of those who distance themselves from these efforts and go as far as accusing the renowned wise men or Orafa'a and "branding" them as Sufis. They even consider their Irfan as nothing but a contradiction to the style of Sufism, an extravagance in mysticism and a full denial to the word connotation.
There is plenty – in the afore-mentioned excerpts by Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen (in his Al Asfar) and Imam Khomeini – to satisfy those who care to listen and contemplate.

Our aim in discussing this title is to draw attention to the fact that many amongst the renowned scientists do follow similar deductive style in fiqh – a rationale in transport – that would lead to some facts in the spiritual dimension with evidence and proofs based on the same mindset and style employed in fiqh and the fundamentals.

It is crystal clear that the spiritual dimension has its own environment that would mark the rationale style with its own features. Talking about the deeds of the soul and its subtractions is quite different from any talk about a soul with its features, its original principles, its destiny, and the ethics of lineage to Almighty God, the force bestowed on it by God Almighty and all that it may achieve when it adopts the right path.
Our need to pay attention to the pioneers of this style should be beyond the emotional yearnings of an alien to return home.

Careful listening to such pioneers would even reveal that all patterns of revelation or seeing and the estranged terminology are no more than logical consequences of its causes akin to reasons and conjecture. It is not dissimilar to intuition being based on inner objective elements unrelated to any form of deviations as illustrated in the Quranic saying ".. *and causeth them to grow, and teacheth them..*" [03:164].

VI. He Teaches Them and He Sanctifies Them

It is only by following the rhythm of the heart's fiqh that we may enter the expanse of the fiqh of life. Is not life but a "beating heart" throbbing with love, full of esteem values, outpouring with lights, copious with happiness and intimacy, and the assuredness of relating conviction with truth? Is it not the feeling of security- in one's path- as bestowed by the origin of all hopes and the promising of safe and happy destiny?

The application of knowledge is its sole target. In other words, it is the prince of all the limbs that provide the link between science and practice.

Is it not the feelings in the heart and its emotions in reasons that distinguish what is human and what is animal or inanimate?

If the heart is not to be the Mecca of reason in the spectre of knowledge and speculation, reason will be the Mecca of the heart in the spectre of practice and application. Would it then be knowledge that we speak of or would it be a combined nescience?

The value of knowledge is a flexible concept whose definition seems to change according to the type of knowledge we could think of. The highest ranking position is surely kept for the type that share in the making of humankind in its true perceptive meanings of commitment to all elements of the fiqh of life and heart. Those are the elements that can not be dealt with objectively without specifying our view of the universe and life and where humans are located within.

The type of knowledge that is mainly concerned with facilitating human life would never rise to such heights

despite its high value of knowledge. There is a big gap separating those forming reasons and hearts of mankind and those facilitating the motions of body in fulfilling its carnal desires or meeting its human wants.
The first is the absolute knowledge while the second is only a branch of it. And any confusing the two has led to inserting the machine within the definition of knowledge and that led to the marginalisation of true knowledge in our contemporary world.
Is it possible to maintain the research for the motion of the heart without having to maintain the following central question: should it be God's or human's genuineness?
And what type of humans are we talking about: the God human or the honourable vicegerent?
And what are the limits of his chart for freedom? What laws would sanction those limits?
And, consequently, what are the basic laws, rights and liberties that we can use to speculate about globalisation? Should we base our speculations on our thanks to God Almighty? Or on the Korah's rules of military intelligence and economy, as in "*Only by force of knowledge I obtained it*" [39:49]?

It has become clear that our hearts are central to leading the paths of all cultural and rational movements in our time including the five articles, previously referred to, that are far ahead of everything else in our world.
In such clarification lies the evidence to the centralism of "sanctification" under the title of education and teaching in what seems to be a shy attempt to pay back some of its dues. But it soon gets crushed under the wheels of blind materialism and commercial globalisation that leads to a

fuller image of an education bent on answering the bills of sale as evidence to how far we have gone in denying true education and sanctification. Our world has become so materialistic that it made true education appears to be coming from another world, while sanctification is being made to look as if it belongs to a forgotten tradition. It has become completely different from what it used to be in order to accept modernity and conform to all that is new.

In a world where education is being mechanised by linking it to a soulless stock market that is completely void of any morals the concept of sanctification in the inerrant text appears to be out of touch with reality.

What education is it when the one who claims to be the "chairman" of the world feels free to chart the world map as he alone sees fit?

And what morality is there in supporting the aggressor and in the killing of the innocent natives or the destruction of their homes? Where is the morality in forcing an airliner to apologise, to escape an allegation of anti-Semitism, after one of its pilots, mistakenly, uttered the word Palestine next to the intrusive name of Israel in his landing announcement. The whole world - including most Muslims - remains silent.

These are but few of the signs illuminating the difficulties in relating the inerrant text to a world burdened with so many educational shortages and with a gross lack of any sense of sanctification.

When we come to realise that sanctification to the inerrant text is like a central nerve to the body and that it all comes down to having a sense of peace and security in life, all difficulties fade away to a state of questioning instead of infeasibility.

I have asked this profound question hoping that the answer would lead to my first target of showing the right way to repent as a starter to our return to the ways of reason and be ridden of the whirlpool of madness and futility.
The concept of "He sanctifies them and He teaches them" is fundamentally different from the haphazard concept of industrial learning that aims at commercial gains instead of education except where it may benefit its interests. This Godly concept presents a wider image of, on one hand, the interactions between a close-minded heart and the pulsating thoughts of love and values and, on the other hand, the interactions of a heart open to all people –to the extent of being part of them or sacrificing own life for them- with science and enlightenment.
Owner of such a closed heart may in reality be far more educated than the owner of the open hearted person but what really counts is the type of knowledge that travels from reason to the heart to take its rightful position in the path of practical reality.
It all depends on understanding sanctification as a concept of balancing what one takes and what one gives back. The evidence of such common sense is all around us and in the realisation that the finding of any truth is dependent on whatever effort is put into it.
Sanctification, therefore, seems to get hold of the process of learning whether that of the individual or that of the plural and whether it is the application of the set knowledge or that of seeking the unknown.
Neglecting it would definitely dwarf the humanity of mankind and surrender it to the whims of the means and the machine, and that is the greatest crisis of knowledge facing

humanity at the onset of the third millennium. It is, truly, a crisis of sanctification.

The ultimate value in our modern world has become that of transport, communication and other means of leisure including all the latest inventions for mass destruction; the means of securing “full satisfaction for the American Master”, inventor of the utmost gigantic machines. It is being achieved on the account of sacrificing human values and human dignity.

The humanity of mankind is no more a target for humans to aim at nor is ideology a requisite for our existence except when it serves commercial gains or carnal desires. Nobody is interested any more in preserving our virtues and preventing them from being taken over by our desires and other earthly wishes. This is simply a displacement of bestiality for humanity: “.. *most astray from the Path* ..” [17:72].

It can be clearly seen by simply looking at what the modern human has become; owner of a bank account, an adventurer, a gambler and a cheater who is allowed to get away with anything because of our “learning” and advertising curricula and because of our corrupt society that encourages his desires and drives him to cheat or bribe, a man whose desire to kill is greatly enhanced by the latest inventions.

It is a very exciting poster board: a ferocious beast in front of a jungle of electronic keys enabling it to fulfil unimaginable wishes such as launching intercontinental missiles and detonating nuclear bombs, or even using a briefcase like the ones claimed to be sold after the collapse of the Soviet Union that would destroy whole cities in ways similar to what happened to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It is clearly obvious that the root of all socio-political problems lies in the replacement of the value of knowledge for that of machine, the replacement of human virtue with the mechanical virtue that led to the current erroneous look at laws and liberties, and left the door widely open for a new colonialism not requiring the use of military force but the use of giant multinational corporations feeding on vast financial transfer and unlimited resources of communications. A new colonialism that will not hesitate to resort to its enormous stock of fire power and destroy whatever stands in its way if the needs demand it. This is the reality of a monstrous globalisation.

Limiting the information revolution is definitely not the answer here nor is any limitation to other technical advances; it is in maintaining the true value of knowledge in its rightful place to preserve humanity as central to all and to place technology at the service of man not the other way round.

Such a balance between knowledge and machine can only be maintained through a style of knowledge that combines theoretical knowledge and its application in the field of behaviour and practice, which is exactly what sanctification means.

Among the many styles of knowledge we ought to seek the one that promotes high standards of manners because the concept of behaviour and business is a matter of ethics. And that brings us face to face with the aspect of self discipline that would ensure the purity of knowledge and keeps it away from the abyss of complex applications that ought to be kept within the line of behaviour and practice. The "knowledgeable" should always reflect the embodiment of

his knowledge. Any blemish in such an embodiment indicates a shortcoming in the knowledge itself.
"God Almighty accepts no practice without knowledge nor knowledge without practice. That who knows would be guided by his knowledge to practice and that who shuns practice has no knowledge; faith is an interactive practice"[1].
"The knowledgeable self is at one with the aspects of its knowledge and all knowledge becomes practical within the knowledgeable self just like the edible food becoming part of the self that feeds on it"[2].

The meaning of all this is that sanctification has reached such high standards that it became able to combine science with deeds presenting to the world the element of the 'knowledgeable'. Its journey has been a hard one on both scales as will be shown through illustrating the second target of the present title.

Let us now listen to the sayings of a student, who tried in vain, at first, talking about the difficulties in reaching the edges of the factual inerrant text: "I would like to tell what happened to me. Someone may learn a lesson from it and become more aware. During my studies of mind sciences and Irfanic publications I became overwhelmed with harrowing thoughts and malicious suspicions that I lost my sense of judgement and all hopes to reach the true beliefs. My mind was full of all sorts of accusations with regards to any harmony between the laws of the enlightened one (Pbuh) and the Irfanic affairs of reason. My failure to compromise the two issues caused me tremendous stress and forced me to

[1] Imam Jaafar Al Sadiq (as), Osool Al Kafi, vol. 1/44.
[2] Judge Sa'id Al Qummi, see: Henry Korean,pp/155.

over burden my teachers with my questions. I was extremely anxious not to embarrass or annoy them for they were the shining stars in the world of science and knowledge. My thoughts triggered a negative feeling within me towards all concepts of scientific thinking and towards all senses of Irfan or logics and wisdom. But I persevered in attending my lessons in the hope that “God may reveal something”. I kept all my thoughts to myself and resorted to seeking solutions through the texts of the great wise men such as Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen who said the following about the unity of soul and functioning mind: we beseeched it with our minds, we raised our inner arms towards it, we prostrated our selves at his feet and we supplicated to him for his guidance.[1]

The only thing that saved me in the end was a conclusion that if all the other leading philosophers and pillars of wisdom and knowledge such as the second teacher Abu Nasr Al Farabi or The Chieftain sheikh Ibn Sina (Avicenna), or the sheikh Mohyee El Deen Bin Arabi, or the teacher of all Khawaja Nasir-ul-Deen Al-Toosi, or father of all virtues Sheikh Bahai, or the third teacher Meerdamad, or Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen Sheerazi, all failed to reach the (truths) would I be more fortunate to do so?

And so, I began to compare my situation against all those great scholars and then ask myself: am I more worthy of the answers? Just like what Sheikh Bahai said about Sheikh al-Suddooq who accepted the story on the prophet’s forgetfulness (sahuw). Bahai said: if the issue is whether the prophet or Sayed al-Suddooq be the one to forget, it would far better that Suddooq is to forget.

The comparison did provide me with some comfort but the final satisfaction was not available until I saw the light that

[1] Al Asfar, vol1, first edition, pp 284.

came over me like the flood. It was in the sudden realisation that my real refuge was in my return to the God of all humans and to the profound sayings of Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen: "God forbid that His whiter than white laws be against anything that is true, and woe to any philosophy not complying with the laws of the Book and the Sunna"[1].

When the doors to the mercy of God were opened we found that, through the means of science conviction or the very heart of conviction, all the requirements of reason or those of irfanic nature, be it attainable with unavailable ease, are clues to many treasures of knowledge.
It is never an easy task for any learner to acquire knowledge; it demands a lot of efforts and travels[2].

Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen himself referred to how he suffered in his quest for the facts of the inerrant text. The introduction to his book, Al Asfar, contains a description of his determination to reach those summits from whatever points available. His is the word that should be taken with the utmost care and contemplation for he, God bless his soul, is the ultimate expert in this and other fields, and as said, *Juhainah will bring the certain news*.
He speaks about his own experience in reaching the doorsteps of the science of facts which allowed him to delve deep inside and grasp the sought after drink. He says in the introduction: And I put all my energetic youth in God's philosophy ".." and gathered all the best of what there was in the Greek publications and the publications of the teaching

[1] Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen, Al Asfar, vol 4, first ed. p75.
[2] Ayatullah Sheikh Hasan Zadah Aameli, 'Quran, Irfan wa Burhan', pp34-36, translated from Persian text.

chieftains. I then settled into a corner somewhere in the countryside with a broken heart and sheer humility bent on carrying out my duties toward the Almighty God and hoping to meet with his approval "..".

And it was under the long lasting stresses of such a situation of contemplative isolation, inactivity and depravity that I got to a stage of missing the burning strife and the longing for mental exercises that reason began a realisation of Gods enlightenment ".." Secrets unknown to me before began to be revealed and unknown clues started to be unveiled. It was through God's enlightenment that I came to know all I learned and to have the knowledge I gained. All was corroborated by evidential proof and clarity".

His clues referred to so many treasures of the truth that will never be obtained without exhaustive religious exercises and true efforts of mind. I do beg God's forgiveness for all the time I wasted chasing the various opinions and ideologies of many philosophizers and arguers of scholastic theology until I came to the realisation- as illuminated by the lights of conviction- that their scales were futile and their path was not the straight one".[1]

This is an accreditation, by some one knowledgeable in philosophy, corroborating the high ranking position for this type of science that we came to know eventually as (Irfan). The sure way to it is not by learning the ways of philosophers or speech experts or their pedagogy, although this might form part of a way of learning.

He also made reference to how these sciences were so rational and highly specialised, and said: no science will ever occur without the full involvement of the body and

[1] Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen, Introduction to "Al Asfar Al Arba'a", pp11.

application of the soul, and no science would ever accomplish the human ego by ridding it of all its defects and contaminants and bringing it back to its creator the provider except the pure sciences of mind. The learning about God and his names, His angels, His books, His messengers and how all things emanate from Him in perfect form and perfect order, and how He takes care of it and formulates it without any hesitations, lethargy or apathy, the learning of the soul on its path to the afterlife and its linkage to the highest command free from all its covenants and earthly ties.[1]

The above-mentioned excerpts can be considered as references to a combination of mind refinement and soul chastity allowing a bold charge into those fields. But as for refining the soul's image we may find the appropriate reference in the following excerpt of his text: "the need for practice and worshipping with body and soul demands a purity of soul and chastity of Islamic laws along with bodily exercises that would prevent the souls from falling into a state of bodily defeatism and negativity. A state that may drive the soul away from nearing the disciples or observing the beauties of life or the lights of the holy ones".[2]

This excerpt inspires the following remarks:

A- If composing an essay requires full attention and complete concentration, what would be required for realising the truth? And if writing an impeccable poem requires soul sublimation, what would be required for charting the elements of existence on the board of enlightenment and on the page of the heart?

[1] Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen, Al Asfar, vol 4, first ed. P3.
[2] Op. cit, p3-4.

B- It exactly at this point of bodily defeatism that the worldly movement of liberating the one and all starts. At the same point, also, lies the beginning of its end and the root of all its failures, its spiralling and its ultimate displacement.

C- The safe approach towards the truth is to keep a clean environment for reason and soul to be able to get to and complement the truths of the here and the other worlds, that are the origin and the rest are the shade. This is the task for reason, the law and good manners.

Any objective onlooker at the words of the great specialists in the inerrant text would clearly see that the position of sanctification in their work is not far from the position of a laboratory in the works of experimental scientists.
It goes without saying that all achievements in biological or other scientific fields are based on the outcomes of experimental researches. Any of these outcomes could easily transform the opinions of a vast majority of scientists to the extent that any observer of scientific discoveries would clearly see that the whole thing is no more than laboratorial movement. It could also be seen that there is a big gab between those who rely on their experimental work and those who did not have the chance for any experimental work and therefore, tended to resort to theorisation.

A similar gap does separate the outcomes of those scientists who adopt the style of "He chastises them and He teaches them" in their researches and the outcomes of those who only pay minimum consideration to that style.

It shows the difference between the sanctification scientists with their approach to the inerrant text through the right path and those who do not believe in sanctification.
Sanctification to God's scientists who graduated from the University of Psychology is the laboratory that allows them to "discover" and "see" just as the laboratory allows a scientist to see and discover in his research.

And it is here that we come to realise another dimension to what Sheikh Bahai[1] said as just another lingual form of the same.
It is only natural that nothing can be accepted as per say without any checks or control, just as is the case with any discoverer who uses the laboratory as a means of research and study. The following criteria had to be met before accepting any claim:

1- Confirmation of speciality.
2- Confirmation of the use of laboratory practice.
3- Confirmation of the procedural approach in the practice. Results should not be used to alter the set procedures.
4- Confirmation that there was no mutation between the conclusions and the experimental results.
5- We, also, have to consult with the specialists before we make any judgement about the results of any research; they would be in a position to clarify all the details.
6- And finally, the outcomes have to be sorted out in a way that would show their classification and whether such outcomes were worthy of any consideration or to

[1] See chapter two, the Inerrant Text, The worlds of light and darkness.

be adopted wholly or they may be considered somewhere in between.

God's scientists in their search for the true values of the inerrant text will be the first to agree to such a system of strict measures and checks. They will even take it further by insisting that the outcomes should never exceed the denotations of the word.

And that is exactly what Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen was referring to in his afore-mentioned saying of: "Every thing I learned was confirmed by evidence and eye witness testimonies".

The proof he speaks of is the one committed to the denotation of the word the phenomenal governance. The proof that he went further to confirm by saying: "their speech may fall under the description of calamities which is meant to divert the language of Islamic law away from its clear signs onto the incomprehensible mysticism".

It would be a great loss if we "crossed out" all the "laboratory" researches carried out by all those theistic scientists. It would even be more than a calamity and an act of sheer ignorance to cancel the concept of laboratorial work and all the gains it could provide us with.

Avicenna says: "here is an advice: never let your high education or your success make you feel superior to your fellow man. There is nothing wrong in rejecting what you can not prove or misbelieving what can not be qualified. You better keep on the right path no matter how hard your walk may get. Be aware that nature is full of wonders and life is full of the high and low".[1]

[1] Avicenna, "Al Isharat" with elucidation, vol. 3/418 (compact disc, Noor Software, Qum).

Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen says: “never suspect that what those great scientists and scholars added to our knowledge is lacking in evidence or proof. Theirs, God forbids, are not the meaningless uttering of ignorance or the illusive imaginations of poetry”.[1]

As we mentioned before, most of the leading authorities in such knowledges do reaffirm that any research employing testing and observation is the right one and no sane mind would confer on it any qualification of oddity, just as with genius attributed to the few without being odd.

It is the style of wisdom in the sense of placing everything in its rightful site, “*and he unto whom wisdom is given, he truly hath received abundant good*” [02:269].

It is enough to quote, at first, parts of the “Isharat” book by Sheikh Avicenna as published by Ayatullah Sheikh Hasan Zadah Aameli and later on more of his writings that Aamily did not publish.

Ayatullah Aameli said: “Avicenna was one of the leading mathematicians and philosophers who managed to corroborate the Irfanic facts. He demonstrated in chapters 8 and 19 of his book “Al Isharat” various countless pattern of Irfan in glorious guises of the proof (*Burhan*). Chapter 8 was entitled “Seats of the A’arifeen, *Maqamaat al-‘Arifeen*.

Chapter 10 dealt with mystic secrets of signs, the knowledge of the unseen, the occurrence of supernatural phenomena and the revealed miracles. He clarified all that by means of his logic and analogy of natural causes, similar to his discussion

[1] Ayatullah Sheikh Hasan Zadah Aameli, ‘Quran, Irfan wa Burhan’, (Persian), pp91, quoted from “Al Asfar Al Arba’a” vol.1, 1st.ed.pp189.

in Chapter 3 and Chapter 7 on the knowledge of the human soul".

Aameli added: "The occurrence of miracles, paranormals and many other metaphysical events can be explained by reasons related to the human soul by God's willing. Such willing is not in the sense of the linguistic willing used in the usual human conversations but as God's permission in its existential reality that befits the eternal existence in reason of those who believe in monotheism as revealed in the Quran. The spoken human soul may reach perfection and intense existence to the extent that all other forms of existence in the world become part of that soul. All forms of living matter surrender to the power and control of the soul".

"All the following phenomena, whether physical or metaphysical, are related to the human soul as God permits: curing the blind, transforming fire onto cold and peace to Abraham, bringing the rain by praying, germination of seeds, praising of the rocks, transforming the stick into a snake, splitting the moon, splitting the trees, splitting the earth, splitting the sea, resurrecting the dead, curing the ill and the likes. The believers always relate everything directly to God without any regards to means or methods while the naturalists tend to relate everything to the causes".

"The naturalists talk about rain being formed from water vapour, about a tree growing out of combined efforts by the root and the leaf, and animal reproduction being the outcome of temperature and the action of the womb".

"The monotheists believe that the causes belong to God for he is the creator of all worldly causes as he says: "*And We send the winds fertilising*" [15:22].

"….in summary; Sheikh Avicenna had managed to provide the evidence, based on the physics of nature, in chapter 10 of

his book "Al Isharat" that all metaphysical phenomena originate from the man".[1]

It may be useful at this stage to recall some of what Avicenna wrote in his book, Al Isharat:
1." You may have heard some old tales that were so unbelievable that you immediately disregarded them. Tales like that of the Knower ('Aaref) "who prayed for rain and rain did fall, or who prayed for illness to be cured and it did, or who cursed some people and they were destroyed and he then forgave them and they were saved. History is full of such, apparently, unbelievable stories that the sane mind can not take seriously.
I beg of you not to rush into any quick judgement, for there might be some natural reasons for such stories and I would be happy to tell you about some of them".[2]
Avicenna explained, in a philosophical medical way, how a Knower ('Aaref) could remain without food for a long time, and how an individual may communicate with the unseen world while asleep. He related all that to natural causes just as he did with some extraordinary strength that some people may have. It all goes back to the power of the human soul that becomes able to deal with the unseen as it does in its daily matters. His following explanation offers more:

2. All strange events arise in nature from three main sources; one is the state of human soul, two is the natural properties of elements such as magnetism, and three lies in the links between heavenly powers and certain earthly object moods or

[1] Op. cit, pp 91-94 with some interpretations.
[2] Avicenna, "Al Isharat" with elucidation, vol. 3/413 (compact disc, Noor Software, Qum).

certain earthly soul powers in a way that leads to the occurrence of the strange events. Magic is an example of the first type and miracles and Nerinjats[1] belong to the second while the talismanic events belong to the third type[2].

It is time now to consider the following facts upon the above and the likes[3]:

One. To reject the concept of the unseen and to classify it as insane is as wrong as to reject the concept of remote control.

Two. The dimensions of human greatness as exemplified by the leading scholars are far beyond the reach of any materialistic allegations. Human soul possesses enough powers to transform matters as if were body and organs.

Three. The cornerstone to all that is the concept of sanctification which shows that the mere analogy between the laboratory and sanctification is meant only to draw attention to how widely open chastisement is for all to explore. It is

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[1] "The Nerinjat as the plural for Nering which is taking up like magic but with it. No Arabic equivalent to the Persian word "Nering" (meaning, deceit), " Mojam Al Mofradat Al GHareebah" which is an appendix to "Al Makasib" by Sheikh al Ansari, vol.2/316 (examining committee edition, 1417, al-Hadi est., Qum).

[2] Op. cit, p417.

[3] Ayatullah Al Aameli narrated more of it- other than what is already mentioned- about simplifying the grammars by "Sa'en El Deen". He said that amongst those who tried to prove the irfanic truth was his grandfather "Abu Hamid Sl Asfahany" known by his book "Terkah" in the rules of monotheism, Ibn Al Fanary, lord justice Mohammad bin Hamza in "Misbah Al Unse" which is an interpretation to the letter written by Sadr-ul-Deen Al Qunawy's "Moftah Ghaib Al Jame'a Wal wujood" and finally, Sadr-ul-Mutaalliheen in the "Al Asfar" who ended with saying, at the end of chapter 11 (Al Asfar,vol. 4 ed. 1, pp130): "we made their etiquette discoveries compliant with evidential laws".

like describing God's enlightenment as the lantern that illuminates all.

We have to make sure here not to generalise to the extent that we include the situations of the infallibles communicating with the unseen because these are very special cases. It may seem that there was a degree of generalisation in what we quoted by Ayatullah al Aameli or that of Avicenna, but the main point remains that it is possible to interpret what seems to be strange to us by natural causes.

VII. Approaching the Text

There are two main factors in our failure to deal with the Inerrant Text:
The First is related to the lack of an appropriate mechanism for such dealing.
The Second is the failing to realise its nature which has led to the absence of any consideration to its speciality.
Both are methodical flaws as explained in the introduction.
The following is an attempt at analysing those two factors taking into account certain considerations about the nature of the inerrant text.

It should be enough, regarding the first factor, to draw the attention to how unique is the deductive methodology and to refer to its assumptions in the books for fundamentalism and laws of jurisprudence. Added to that is the fact that we do not face a crisis of method or intellect. We are facing a problem of presentation that depends mainly on quality reading.
Our troubles could be avoided if we cared to adopt similar method to the one employed with diligence by our pious scientists.
Our nation's practical separation from the authority entrusted with caring for the Text has led our people to seek alien springs of knowledge under the illusion that our tradition could not provide answers to the problems of modern life. Such an illusion has grown in strength to the extent that some of "hawzah (school) circles" – usually, the most mobile of the Islamic movements- had fallen prey to its erroneous logic. It is important here, and before we make any judgement about the method appointed by those hawzah (school) circles, to consider the following two issues:

One: that the allegations are usually considered as an admission by whoever is concerned that the appointed method lacks the means to reach the assumptions of Islamic laws (Shari'ah), and not as a call for changes in educational materials or fixing our priorities.
Two: that by avoiding the unique treasures of methodology and failing to present what we learned from it, we have generated an increasing "methodological congestion" while thinking that we were setting up bases for a new methodology.
The deductive method appointed by the 'hawzah' scientific circles is a transitional rational method that is unsurpassed in its speciality. It has contributed to formulating the concept of methodology and added enormously to human knowledge.
The Martyr Sadr says: the science of fundamentalism has contributed widely to solving many problems within the human intellect and did not confide itself to its original speciality. It has reached its peak during the last part of the third scientific century where it covered all philosophical methods and means of thought and conclusion. It did not remain confined within the traditional boundaries that limited philosophy throughout the preceding three centuries and kept it in fear of venturing beyond a preset line of thought. Traditional philosophy always revered its leading authorities and maintained their established ways of thinking as its ultimate aims and targets. The fundamental science, on the other hand, managed to free itself from all the shackles of reverence and delved intelligently into the depth of all philosophical problems without any hindrance from anything traditional. It was with such a free spirit that the fundamental science dealt with many philosophical and logical issues related to its aims or targets, and excelled in ways unknown

in the traditional philosophy. It must be said that what the fundamental science has added to our knowledge within its fields of philosophy and logic far exceeded what the Muslim philosophers offered in those fields.

The following list includes some of those fields of excellence:
1. The theory of Knowledge (*ma'rifah*) as the one looking into the values of human knowledge, its resources and to what extent we can rely on it. The efforts in this field were reflected in the heated arguments between the jurisprudents (mujtaheds) and the reporters (ikhabris) that led to numerous new ideas in this field. We did notice, as previously mentioned, how this argument made it possible for the sensual ideology to sneak into the scientific thoughts of our jurisprudents at the time when such thoughts were not even heard of in the western philosophies.

2. The linguistic philosophy where the fundamental science seemed to be ahead of the most recent trend of "imagery logic" as proposed by mathematicians who related mathematics to logic and logic to language, and considered the philosopher's main task to philosophically analyse language instead of analysing the outer existence. Fundamental scientists were the first in the process of linguistic analysis as seen in their researches in literal meanings and in fundamental forms. It is worth referring here to what Russell said about the difficulty in differentiating between the two terms: "Caesar died" and "the death of Caesar" or "Caesar's death is true" in his attempt at linguistic analysis. He could not come up with any conclusion other

than saying that he failed to answer it satisfactorily.[1] I find it curious that such a renowned authority in the modern field, like Russell, fails to analyse the difference between such terms when the old science of fundamentalism had already done so and even provided more than one explanation for it.

3. There we may find within the works of some fundamental scientists the seeds for the theory of "Logical Forms" such as the case when the investigator Sheikh Muhammad Kadhem Al Khurasany reported in his book (Al Kifayah) how he tried to differentiate between "True Demand" and "Composite Demand" within the scope of the main concept of that theory. This proves that fundamentalism did precede Bertrand Russell who proposed that theory. It may even have gone further by discussing the theory and putting forward some evidence against it and untangling few of its contradictions that were used as bases for Russell's theory.

4. One of the most complicated issues that old and modern linguistic philosophies tried to solve by linguistic philosophical analysis was related to the issue of certain expressions having no tangible meanings such as "the linkage of heat and fire". Would such correlation apart from the existence of fire and heat be present? And if so, where would it exist? If it did not exist, how would we talk about it?
Fundamental science excelled in investigating such an issue free from all the ties of traditional philosophies that would confine it within the concept of nihilism and existence.

[1] "Fundamental Arithmetic", vol.1,pp96, translated by Doc Mohammad Mosa Ahmad and Doc Ahmad Fouad Al Ahwany.

The examples mentioned so far are given at this stage to provide the starting students with a general idea of what to come, Gods willing, in the coming episodes.[1]

To fully comprehend the depth of what the Martyr al Sadr meant, one has to examine carefully his book, The Logical Bases for Induction, with special attention to the notion of how a modest looking idea may form the basis of all experimental methodology, or another the basis for exploration as in the Imagery Methodology.

With the second factor we can list the following points to illustrate its causes:
1. Sharp decline in the numbers of those who believe in the unseen which has led to an overall decline of the spiritual dimension within the Islamic cities or circles proportional to the activities of their tyrannical authorities who replaced the Islamic methods of education –based on "chastisement and education"- with a hybrid method based on education alone.
It is idiomatic that each text would have its own environment that a successful interpreter has to fully comprehend.
It also goes without saying that any association with the tendency towards elemental interpretation of the text or the Sufis' reactions supporting such tendency, would lead to further reaction.

2. Glorification of atheism and the feeling of inferiority against it had led to further inclination towards a materialistic understanding of the religious text despite its immaterial nature. For even though it is concerned with the world of the

[1] The martyr al Sadr (ref. Sayed Mohammad Baqer), "Al Ma'alem Al Jadeedah Fi Al Usool", pp96-98.

seen, it is also concerned with opening the human mind to believing in the world of the unseen, not as a transitional phenomenon but as a fundamental aspect of the origin, the beginning and the end.

3. The wide dispersion of certain erroneous ideas among the Muslim communities that aim at rendering reasons vulnerable to specific instructions or ideas such as “origin of man” or “freedom” or “reason” or “reality” and “women’s rights” with its prevailing thoughts that are implicitly false.

4. The three previous points contributed to generate another factor that has to do with the attitude of some non-Islamists who seem to adopt a position of “… and you be my witness at the Emir’s court” in their approach to Islamic ideology where they speak up in order to be rewarded while the world testifies to their rationality and modernity. Such an attitude exceeds the damage incurred by the glorification of atheism and proceeds to the peaks of weightlessness and entire cultural theft.

This is not an isolated incidence but is closely linked to what is said so far. Any defect in the structure of methodology is bound to take many unawares, myself included, and it is crucial that we all follow a strict set of checks and measures in our research. I am not accusing any body here with malpractice but I am more concerned with the weakness of human soul and its falling in the traps of temptations. It is not too far to recall how many people succumb to what is prevalent and strife to secure a place onboard.

We all agree that cultural openness is a matter of great significance, but it is even more significant for any

experienced researcher to distinguish it from any cultural theft or even from an odd combination of the two.
It is important to make sure that Islamic ideology is presented in an eloquent modern fashion easily accessed and accepted by all but it is also important not to let the learning person shift from a receiving position to an instructing one, taking over the role of the instructor, "God Almighty and the Infallible", and reason of the writer.
Let us be sure of what we have first and then talk about style, how to reach the others and gain their admiration. To combine both may take us away from the necessary and onto the harmful.

5. What is more significant is that we tend to "read the others" well but fail to read what we have. Factor 4 above may throw some light on this. It is worrying that the cultures of the "others" become the source or the basis of our looking into our text or its methodology. Had we read with care what Muslim scholars published throughout the centuries, we would have found vast treasures of advanced and progressive visions in all fields of knowledge highly appreciated by all modern authorities.
The evidence are not that far; it can be easily found in the Irfanic, philosophical and social thinking of Imam Khomeini and the writings of the renowned scholar Sayed Tabataba'i in "Tafseer Al Meezan" – a priceless publication- and various other scholars such as the two martyrs; Motahary and Sadr. Their heritage included comprehensive approaches to all that is attracting the attentions of every cultural and rational movement throughout the whole world including the Imagery Logic of Aristotle and globalisation. There is enough in the

"Tafseer Al Meezan"- if we care to set up a committee to present its researches- to make a radical rational change.

In conclusion the following issues may summarise all the bases that ought to be taken into account when we consider any serious approach to analyse or interpret the inerrant text:
One: The inerrant text represents a bridge between the unseen and the seen worlds emphasising, in its content and values, that the first is the fundamental and the source while the second is the branch or the shadow.
Two: The mere presence of the inerrant text within the human reach is in itself an indication to a unique and distinguished fact that the unseen had interposed into the seen world at a scale proportional to the scope of the inerrant text spanning from genesis to dooms day and thereafter, and also in proportion to the textual decree of the unseen world having the ultimate say in the philosophy of existence, the creation of humankind in all its aspects of format, functionality and objections, and in what is to be done or left undone within the rules of selection.
Three: It is idiomatic that such a fact becomes more of an oddity in a world drowning in shallow thinking and materialism to the extent that the unseen is taken as a matter of interfering myth whose details would limit our alleged liberty and would include more unimaginable forms of "oddities" in the shapes of business incorporation or true imagery or huge rewards or severe punishment or numerous others of similar facts.
Four: The shallowness of thought and the scale of materialistic penetration in our world have reached an extreme level of tyranny that it seeped outside its own boundaries and flooded the lands of those upholding a

conviction of the unseen and drowning them within its stream of materialism and its trappings.

Five: Adopting the concept of estrangement as guidance and as an "rational method" enabled the materialistic trends to over flood the arenas of individual or plural minds and transform them into swamps threatening the safety of man and its environment, and ultimately the entirety of "mankind" project. We have to be fully aware of realising the cardinal difference between the lowest and the highest in adopting estrangement as a guide. Such differences are only a matter of gradation. Anyone who denies a guardian miracle - as part of his overall denial of all miracles – guided by the concept of wonderment would not be qualified, unless he reconsiders, to a conviction of prophecy which is one of the top miracles and an example of the unseen world coming into the seen world.

Six: The inerrant text represents the final of all Godly messages to humankind which means it would inculcate all the invariables of earlier messages and employ them to construct a foundation for taking humans their ultimate targets.

Seven: The concepts of circumstantialism and historianism are no more than a timing process for the coming of the inerrant text that was predestined for a task greater than all phases or generations.

Eight: If the norm in looking into any ancient or bygone text is to seek the invariable- that might be- it is the opposite with regards to the inerrant text because the text itself is the invariable that contains the variable, if it might be.

Nine: It is a simple fact that a learning student should listen with care and attention to what is said. If instructions are not understood, the learner would not be qualified to deny or

reject the subject and should instead admit that it is beyond his comprehension and that he ought to wait until he reaches maturity or return the subject to its owners. The inerrant text is a mine to the secrets of truth and should only be approached with such fact in mind.

Ten: Scientific progress does not contravene the inerrant text in any field of knowledge because whenever science discovers any truth it meets with the text revealing another of the text secrets. And even when the science falls short of any new discoveries it had gone a long way on the path of meeting with the text.

Our call upon all to be disciplined, to be considerate to all that is around us, to be thoughtful and to follow the route of evidence is nothing but a call to do our best in all fields of scientific research. The self assured ones are reassured further by more researches that get them closer to the truth.

Eleven: Approaching the inerrant text occurs at two levels: specialised and general.

In case of the first type, any individual may have an idea about the aims of the text especially in relation to faith, behaviour and manners. The minimum requirements of good manners and believing in one God are within the reach of most humans albeit with various degrees of learning depending on the differing abilities.

In the second case, the situation is completely different where the specialised learning depends on one of the following two factors:

The first is sanctification which means dealing honestly with the truth and demolishing the gap between theory and practice which enables the forward marching on the paths of the truth.

The second is dealing with the inerrant text according to its specialised fields, just like dealing with any other ordinary text. This would be possible only when the results obtained by scholars of theology who used the sanctification and conclusion method are considered as measurement for any research. Studying the text of the unseen by means of measurements from the seen world goes against all senses of specialisation. It is like studying a physician's text, for example, while holding predetermined negative attitude towards "public health" which is actually a form of deceit.
Further illustrations for this concept were presented within this book especially in chapter section three and under the title of "cultural independence" in this section.

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Friday, 21 Jamada II, 1423 AH
30 August 2002 AD

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Published works (in Arabic):
1. Elucidation, "Sharh Kifayat al Usul", Part 1
2. Practices of Shaaban Month, "Adaab Shahr Shaaban"
3. Practices of Occultation Times, "Adaab 'Asssr al Ghaybah"
4. Encountering the Awaited Mahdi (aj), "Ru'yat al Mahdi al Muntathar"
5. At the Niche of Fatima (as), "Fee Mihrab Fatmia (as)"
6. At the Niche of Karbala, Part 1, from Madina to Madina", "Fee Mihrab Karbala I"
7. At the Niche of Karbala, Part 2, Kufa Events", "Fee Mihrab Karbala II"
8. The Infallible and the Text, "al-Maasoom wal Nass"
9. Fountains of Hope, "Manahel al-Rajaa: Practices of Rajab, Shaaban and the Month of Ramadhan"
10. Imam Khumeini on Colonization Views, "Imam Khumeini wal Isti'mar, Jathriyat al Ru'yah"
11. The Dimension of Statesman in Imam Kumeini's Character, "Bu'ud Rajul al Dawlah fee Shakhsiyat Imam Kumenini"
12. US Goods Boycott, a booklet, "Muqata'at al Badhaeh al Amerikiyah"
13. September 11th, the Pretext; a booklet, "11 Aylul, al Thari'ah"

Books translated by the author from Persian into Arabic:
1. The Grand Strife, "al-Jihad al-Akbar"
2. The Sound Heart, "al Qalb al Salim", by Martyr Ayatullah Sayyed Dastagheeb
3. The Mien of the Righteous, "Simaa al Saliheen", by Sh. Ridha Mukhtari
4. Residences of the Afterlife, "Manazel al Akherah", by Sh. Abbas al Qummi
5. Balsam of the Soul, "Balsam al Rouh; 3 letters", by Imam Khumenei
6. Imam Khumeini's Will, "Wasiyyat Imam Khumenei"
7. Practices of Haj, "Adaab al Haj" (Chapter of 'Tathkirat al Muttaqeen')
8. A Reminder to the Pious, "Tathkirat al Muttaqeen", by Sh. Ismail al Taeb
9. A Paper on Behaviour and Conduct, "Risalah fee al-Seyar wal Sulook", by Sh. Allamah al-Tahrani

Other:
- The writer has several manuscripts under examination in fields of Fiqh, Usul and Ethics Philosophy.
- The writer has written several studies and essays in Islamic Ideology, Fiqh issues, Hadith, Interpretation and Knowledge (Irfan).

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